

THE INTERPERSONAL FUNCTION IN WRITTEN
DISCOURSE:
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ENGLISH AND ITALIAN
UNDERGRADUATE WRITING

Maria Bortoluzzi

Ph.D. Thesis

The University of Edinburgh

1997



ABSTRACT

This study is a comparative analysis of university student writing in English and Italian (the native languages of the students). The main research issue investigated here relates to the differences and similarities in student writing across languages when the same text-type is produced within comparable situations. Cross-linguistic and cross-cultural variation in encoding and transmitting knowledge and in the way critical enquiry is conducted can be an area of potential difficulty when languages and cultures come into contact. Comparative analysis is a tool for investigating, explaining and, possibly, avoiding some of the potential errors and misunderstandings that may arise in cross-cultural communication. In particular the study focuses on writing conventions used by English and Italian native speaker students when writing about literature for their university courses.

The data are texts of argumentative prose about literature (in the students' mother tongue) written for university examinations during an undergraduate degree course. The linguistic analysis focuses on discoursal devices related to the interpersonal metafunction. The fundamental hypothesis underlying the study is that the devices more centrally related to this metafunction can offer insights into the writing conventions adopted by the students. Whereas the interpersonal metafunction as the focus of analysis is a concept derived from Halliday, the actual linguistic analysis of discoursal features draws on different approaches to discourse study because the framework of analysis had to be flexible enough to encompass the investigation of two different languages and there was no standardised method of analysis for the present type of research. The linguistic areas focused upon are: person markers, 'impersonal' and passive structures, modality, evaluative strategies (Politeness Theory), metadiscoursal features, devices establishing an overt link between writer and reader, rhetorical prominence and its effects on discourse.

The Italian and English corpora of data (chosen to be representative of the text-type and the context of language production) have been manually analysed and tagged. The study is qualitative and descriptive (not normative): quantitative observations only contribute to identifying tendencies within a qualitative analysis. The findings have yielded tendencies and insights rather than clear-cut answers to the research questions, and the linguistic investigation itself has opened several potential areas for further research.

The data show that the same argumentative text-type has a similar function in both sets of data, but the encoding of discoursal features indicates that the relation between the main participants (students and examiners) and that between the participants and the literary topics differ cross-linguistically. The English students show a more direct approach to the subject matter and the addressee than do the Italian students. This influences both the linguistic encoding of the argumentative mode in the two sets of data and the conventionalised projection of discourse roles in the students' texts. The study shows that awareness should be raised of the potential problems which might occur at the discourse level when students are asked to use unfamiliar writing conventions or have to write in a foreign language setting.

CONTENTS

Abstract	1
Contents	2
Declaration	10
Acknowledgements	11

Chapter 1: Comparative analysis of written discourse: an introduction

1.1. The general aims of the study	12
1.2. The main characteristics of the study	16
1.3. Contextualising the communicative activity in a cross-linguistic study	17
1.4. The discoursal and pragmatic level of analysis within the comparative perspective	18
1.5. Comparative analysis: a definition of terminology	20

Chapter 2: Comparative discourse and the relevance of contextualization

2.1. Introduction	24
2.2. The development of comparative discourse from the early stages	24
2.3. Present-day comparative discourse analysis in L2 writing	27
2.4. Comparative analysis and process-oriented research	30
2.5. Issues of research methodology	31

2.6. Investigating the context in which writing takes place: socio-cultural aspects	32
2.6.1. Style manuals	33
2.6.2. Writing within the education system: school and university writing	34
2.6.3. Interface between texts and cultural tradition	38
2.7. The context of production and comparative studies	40

Chapter 3: Student writing as text-type and its context of production

3.1. Introduction	43
3.2. A definition of discourse community	44
3.3. Student writing in context	50
3.3.1. The interaction of register and genre within the systemic approach	50
3.3.2. Genre, text-types and student writing	52
3.4. The main characteristics of student writing and the focus of the present study	56
3.4.1. The interpersonal metafunction	57
3.4.2. Field	59
3.4.3. Mode	60
3.4.4. Tenor	63
3.4.4.1. The concept of audience	63
3.4.4.2. The writer as addresser	68

Chapter 4: Data and method of analysis

4.1. Introduction	73
4.2. The data	73
4.2.1. The main criteria for choosing the two sets of data	73
4.2.2. The scope of the study	76
4.2.3. Some conventions used in the data analysis	77
4.3. The method of analysis	78
4.3.1. The method of analysis and the interpersonal metafunction	80
4.3.2. The linguistic categories	81
4.4. The main research questions and hypotheses of the study	82

Chapter 5: Person markers

5.1. Defining terminology	85
5.2. Second person	90
5.3. First person singular	94
5.4. First person plural	103
5.4.1. Impersonal first person plural	107
5.4.2. Vague first person plural	108
5.4.3. Restricted impersonal first person plural	108
5.4.4. Inclusive authorial first person plural	110
5.4.5. Exclusive authorial first person plural	112
5.4.6. An overview of the first person plural	

in context	114
5.5. Some concluding remarks about the use of person markers	116

Chapter 6: Impersonal structures and the passive

PART 1

6.1. Introduction	118
6.2. Impersonal structures	120
6.2.1. Generic <i>one</i>	120
6.2.2. <i>Si</i> constructions in Italian	124
6.2.2.1. The controversial status of the <i>si</i> constructions	125
6.2.2.2. Impersonal <i>si</i> and passive <i>si</i>	126
6.2.2.3. The implied subject or agent of the <i>si</i> constructions	128
6.2.2.4. The data analysis	130
6.2.2.5. Discussion of the data analysis	137
6.2.3. Conclusion: impersonal structures	138

PART 2

6.3. The passive	142
6.3.1. The passive in discourse	142
6.3.2. Degrees of impersonality	148
6.3.3. The data	149
6.3.3.1. Agentful passive	152
6.3.3.2. Agentless passive	157
6.3.3.3. Italian passive auxiliaries	168
6.3.3.4. Retrievability of the agent in context	171

6.3.4. An interpretation of the data	173
6.4. Summary of impersonalisation devices in English and in Italian	176

Chapter 7. Modality

7.1. Introduction	178
7.2. The concept of modality	179
7.3. Categories of modality	181
7.4. Epistemic modality	185
7.4.1. The main notional aspects of epistemic modality: possibility, necessity and prediction	186
7.4.2. The concepts of certainty and doubt	188
7.4.3. Subjectivity and objectivity	190
7.5. Root modality	193
7.5.1. Metadiscoursal and argumentative root modality	196
7.5.2. Notional categories of root modality	199
7.5.3. The subjective/objective continuum	200
7.6. Epistemic and root modality in mergers, clusters and mixed occurrences	202
7.6.1. Mergers	202
7.6.2. Mixed modality and clusters	204
7.6.2.1. Mixed modality	204
7.6.2.2. Clusters	205
7.7. The data analysis	206
7.7.1. General remarks	209

7.7.2. The subjective/objective continuum in the data	210
7.7.3. Apparent inconsistencies in the use of modals	213
7.8. Concluding remarks	215

Chapter 8: Evaluative strategies

8.1. The concept of attitude	218
8.2. Politeness Theory	221
8.3. Evaluative strategies and attitude markers	226
8.4. Politeness strategies	227
8.4.1. Bald on record	229
8.4.2. Positive politeness	233
8.4.3. Negative politeness	240
8.4.4. Off record	250
8.4.5. Some general remarks on evaluative strategies	253

Chapter 9: Metadiscourse

9.1. Introduction	257
9.2. Metadiscourse: definition and scope	257
9.3. Categorisations of metadiscourse	262
9.4. The function of metadiscourse	263
9.5. Metadiscoursal categories	265
9.5.1. References to the text	266

9.5.2. Speech act markers	272
9.5.3. Addressing the reader	279
9.5.4. Connectives	285
9.6. Some concluding remarks	292

Chapter 10: Voices in the scripts: interpersonal devices referring to the context of discourse

10.1. Introduction	295
10.2. Questions	296
10.2.1. Expository questions and speculative questions	299
10.2.2. Rhetorical questions	303
10.2.3. Questions in the data	309
10.3. Intertextual voices	314
10.3.1. Quotation marks	314
10.3.2. Attributors	321
10.4. The voice set aside: brackets in the scripts	323
10.5. Concluding remarks	325

Chapter 11: Rhetorical prominence: bringing out the main point

11.1. Definition of rhetorical structure	328
11.2. Expository and argumentative texts	330
11.2.1. Argumentative prose in the scripts	333
11.3. Argumentation theory and the art of rhetoric	335

11.3.1. Pragma-dialectics and the concept of main point	335
11.4. Clause relation analysis	336
11.5. Rhetorical Structure Theory	340
11.6. Genre analysis	343
11.7. A cross-linguistic study of text structures	344
11.8. The main point in a text	345
11.8.1. The main point defined	345
11.8.2. Criteria for identifying the main point	349
11.8.3. The main point in its textual environment	350
11.8.3.1. The textual boundaries of the main point	350
11.8.3.2. The semantic and rhetorical functions of the main point	351
11.8.4. The main point in the data	353
11.8.4.1. The main point as 'main question' and 'main evaluation'	354
11.8.4.2. The linguistic indicators of the main point	356
11.8.4.3. The location and characteristics of the main point	362
11.8.4.3.1. The presence of the main point	364
11.8.4.3.2. The main point in the English scripts	366

11.8.4.3.3. The main point in the Italian scripts	370
11.8.4.3.4. The comparison of the findings	374

Chapter 12: Conclusion

12.1. Focus and scope of the study	378
12.2. The limitations of the study	380
12.3. The main questions and the main hypotheses revisited	381
12.4. An interpretation	387
12.5. The pedagogical relevance of cross-linguistic variation	390
12.6. Scope for further research	392

BIBLIOGRAPHY	394
---------------------	-----

APPENDIX 1: Examination tasks	414
--------------------------------------	-----

APPENDIX 2: Data	415
-------------------------	-----

Italian scripts	416
-----------------	-----

English scripts	471
-----------------	-----

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis has been composed by myself and the work is my own.

Maria Bortoluzzi

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe a debt of gratitude to my supervisors for their unfailing encouragement and support throughout the years, especially at times when the work on my thesis did not seem to take shape or proceed. Keith Mitchell, my first supervisor, offered detailed comments and devoted time to discussing issues and problems in an ever-supportive and generous way trying to foster critical thinking and clarity of expression. Elizabeth Black, my second supervisor, helped me all along with her supportive comments and constant presence.

I am grateful to a number of people whose generosity has been invaluable to me in many different ways: academic advice, psychological support, practical help or friendly presence: Federica Pedriali, Elena Semino, Marie Cottrell, Laure Mitchell, the fellow-students of the Department of Applied Linguistics, Joseph Fitzpatrick, Fiona Carmichael and Aris Vetere Rossi. A special thought goes to the late Cécile Victor. This work is dedicated to my sister.

CHAPTER 1

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF WRITTEN DISCOURSE: AN INTRODUCTION

1.1. The general aims of the study

The present study is a comparative analysis of texts written by native speaker undergraduate students in Italian and English as part of their assessment for their university degrees. The analysis compares English and Italian data, it focuses on interrelated discoursal and pragmatic features which offer a multifaceted perspective on the interpersonal use of language and its cross-linguistic relevance in text-types which are traditionally considered focused on the propositional content rather than on the more interactive aspects of communication (Tannen, 1982a, 1982b, 1985a; Chafe, 1985; Chafe and Danielewicz, 1987; Biber, 1988; Halliday, 1989; McCarthy, 1993; Caffi & Janney, 1994).

The general hypothesis which informs the study is that the analysis of interpersonal devices used in the written language of university students can offer insights into some of the conventions which shape university student writing. The hypothesis deriving from this is that interpersonal discourse and pragmatic features of student writing conventions can vary cross-linguistically and cross-culturally. If the hypotheses are confirmed, then the awareness of these cross-cultural differences should be raised in order to find possible sources of mismatch between students' performance and examiners' expectations and limit or avoid discoursal misunderstanding.

In particular, the analysis will focus on the common features and the differences between sets of data written about literary topics for assessment in English and in Italian, respectively by British university students and Italian second-year undergraduates studying their native literatures. The choice of the data has aimed at

targeting specific issues which may become a source of problems for foreign student writers. On the one hand an increasing number of people have to work within an unfamiliar university community and write examination and coursework based on academic conventions which may be rather different from the ones familiar to the students. On the other hand an increasing number of students with different cultural and language backgrounds are required to write in English at some stages of their university course either because they study in an English speaking country or because of the requirements of their degree course (for instance, student exchange programmes across countries in Europe and outside Europe have become increasingly common in recent years).

Writing conventions are shaped by the cultural and education system (Adams *et al.*, 1991; O'Brien, 1992; Turner, 1993; Goddard and Wierzbicka, 1997) and are often unquestioned linguistic and cultural schemata because they have been learned and acquired over the years by the members of the community which contributes to shaping those conventions and is itself partly shaped by them. When different discursual conventions appear in non-native student writing, they may be stigmatised because they are perceived as 'wrong' or alien and, in some cases, the students themselves are considered unable to cope with the given tasks (Sherman, 1992 is an example of such cross-cultural misunderstanding and stigmatization of 'wrong' conventions, as Hargan pointedly remarks in her criticism of it (Hargan, 1995). See also Matalene, 1985; Clyne *et al.*, 1988 on the difficulties of cross-cultural communication).

In some cases cross-linguistic errors do not arise either because conventions are similar across cultures or a negative linguistic transfer does not take place (see, among others, the much quoted study of Mohan and Lo, 1985, a dismissal of cross-cultural variation in academic writing; Taylor & Tingguan, 1991; see also Odlin,

1989 for a general overview of transfer issues). An analysis of transfer is beyond the scope of this study and it can only be hypothesised that some discorsal areas might become problematic issues for non-native speakers writing in the foreign language within an unfamiliar discourse setting. Only a study examining the L2 production could give insights on transfer.

The issue of writing conventions is very complex because it is interrelated with several others: it is influenced by the developmental characteristics of student writing (both for the native and the foreign language), it touches upon the task of the lecturer/examiner as teacher of the writing conventions for the specific subject, the right the students have to learn new writing conventions, the extent to which participants in the activity of the discourse community should comply with or recreate conventions, the extent to which novices to the community are allowed to flout conventions and foreign learners are allowed to flout conventions. I believe there are many ways of confronting these issues and probably as many solutions as there are contexts in which people from different cultures meet. The key to finding these solutions, however, is an awareness of what the source of the problem is and the clear knowledge that writing conventions are culturally and linguistically shaped, not universal rules of communication that should be imposed across languages. Additionally, writing conventions are learned rather than acquired and a teaching input is necessary especially for the most complex writing skills such as academic writing (Mauranen, 1996).

The difficulty of operating within different writing conventions is a strain which does objectively exist, witness the literature published in the field (among others: Connor and Kaplan, 1987; Purves, 1988a; Kroll, 1990; Bloor & Bloor, 1991; Richards & Skelton, 1991; Blue, 1993; Hargan, 1995; Ventola and Mauranen, 1996; Hinkel, 1997). This strain involves students and examiners alike and can add

complexity to the task of writing and evaluating writing when a cross-cultural situation arises.

The present study attempts to devise a framework of analysis in order to examine similarities and differences encoded at the level of discourse in the writing conventions used by students in a specific text-type in the two languages. As already mentioned, the framework will focus on a linguistic area which is hypothesised to yield interesting and controversial insights into university student writing: the interpersonal level of language, a field of study rarely explored in student and academic writing, traditionally considered to be prototypically 'impersonal' and mostly focused on the propositional content (ideational metafunction) rather than on the relationship between the participants in the communicative activity.

This study aims at showing the relevance of the interpersonal aspect of language in this type of writing and how the interpersonal features of language contribute to characterising it. In particular, the study looks at the way in which the addresser constructs her own and the addressee's discourse roles and the attitude shown towards the subject matter she is writing about. The interpersonal metafunction, in Hallidayan terms (Halliday, 1973, 1978, 1985, 1994), is therefore central to the analysis (see Section 3.4.1.).

Given the focus of the analysis, it was necessary to avoid the manipulation of variables at the interpersonal level when gathering the data for this study. To avoid tampering with the data, the choice was made to gather non-elicited data produced in the natural context of production for academic purposes. The texts used as data, therefore, reflect the use of naturally occurring resources of language in a specific context and for specific purposes.

The two languages involved, English and Italian, have a lot in common in terms of linguistic features and background cultural heritage since the study remains within the European perspective (the English examined is only British English). Yet it is hypothesised that at the interpersonal level of language noticeable variations arise even in the case of texts belonging to the same text-type, written in comparable settings and for comparable aims, as explained in the next section.

1.2. The main characteristics of the study

The study is a discourse-based analysis of student writing produced in an Italian and a British academic setting by native speaker students for a comparable task (written examination on literary topics, second year course). The label 'student writing' will be used to mean 'university student writing' (unless differently specified) whereas 'academic writing' will indicate scholarly writing: writing by lecturers and researchers usually for publication. In the literature, the label 'academic writing' can refer to both student writing as well as scholarly writing. When mentioning other studies, I will maintain the terminology used by the author.

The main participants in the communicative event (examination) are the second year students and the lecturers involved in setting the essay titles or examination tasks, the marking and cross-marking. However, as is shown in Sections 3.4.4.1. and 3.4.4.2., the notions of addressers and addressees of the text-type are not simply constituted by a straightforward group of individuals, but are more complex entities related to the context of text production.

The descriptive analysis of the two sets of texts produced by the Italian and the English native speaker students is based on the product not on the process of writing because the study, centred around discoursal features, examines the final result of the writing process, that is the text which is submitted to the examiner for

evaluation. This perspective is closer to the reader's viewpoint, because it is the product of writing which is analysed. At the same time, however, the analyst's viewpoint is different from the reader's because the whole context of production is examined in the discussion of the data (top-down approach) and the different strands of discourse features are related to the overall context (bottom-up approach).

The analyst's viewpoint is also different from that of the main addressee of the texts (the examiners evaluating the examination papers) because the present study is not normative, it is not related to 'good writing' or an evaluation of the students' performances. The study is descriptive of student writing and the cross-linguistic similarities and variations that can be found in the data.

1.3. Contextualising the communicative activity in a cross-linguistic study

Studies comparing different languages and cultures have to broach the issue of comparability of the data (James, 1980; Smith, 1987; Purves, 1988b; Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989; Mauranten, 1993; Blum-Kulka, 1997). At the basis of the present study there is the tenet, derived from the literature of comparative research discussed in Chapter 2, that texts are comparable when the context of production, the type of participants and the communicative activity the participants are engaged in are comparable. When these variables are controlled, the resulting texts can be said to be comparable. The necessity of contextualising language, its process of production and its products is derived from the underlying idea that the language produced by speakers and writers is shaped by and shapes the culture, the context and the communicative activity in which the text is created (Fairclough, 1988, 1992a, 1992b; Kress, 1989; Leckie-Tarry, 1995; Hodge & Kress, 1993; Caldas-Coulthard & Coulthard, 1995; van Dijk, 1997a, 1997b).

The context of production and the text-type of the data will be analysed in detail in Chapter 3 and shown to be comparable for the two languages. The variable which contextualisation cannot control is the difference between the two language systems. The following section deals with this issue, but before examining the complexities of operating with two different language systems, some general remarks about the relationship between culture, context and the data analysis should be made.

Whereas the cultural and discourse context shape the language production and is shaped by it, it is not possible to maintain that the data analysed in this study are representative of entire cultures and academic conventions. Firstly the concept of culture is too broad and multifaceted to be encompassed in one single research study, and secondly the scope of the present research is limited to specific linguistic features which have been chosen as representative of student writing about literary subjects in a university setting, but cannot be said to represent university student writing or the cultural background which produced it in absolute terms. As will be shown in the detailed presentation of the data, the texts can give some insights into a specific field which research so far has investigated in a limited way (research in the field is particularly scarce for Italian), and the study uses a framework of analysis which gives scope for further research in several areas touched upon.

1.4. The discoursal / pragmatic level of analysis within and the comparative perspective

The comparative study of texts in two or more languages has a long tradition (mainly in the field known as contrastive analysis, see literature review in Chapter 2). The comparison of discoursal and pragmatic aspects is a more recent field of study than that of phonetics, morphology and syntax.

When describing and comparing discoursal and pragmatic aspects of texts in two different languages, the texts, the social and discourse roles of the participants have to be related to the context of production and to the specific activity (Brown & Yule, 1983; Widdowson, 1984; Cook, 1989; McCarthy & Carter, 1994; van Dijk, 1997b; Levinson, 1983; Mey, 1994; Thomas, 1995).

If the focus of the study is the interpersonal use of language and therefore the comparison of how discourse roles are constructed in the texts, the attitude of the students towards the subject matter they write about, their own discourse role in the text and the audience discourse role, then these aspects can only be studied analysing the level of discourse in texts (whole texts in the case of the present study) and the pragmatic use of language which can be found in them.

The analysis, therefore, will focus on the discoursal and pragmatic function(s) that linguistic realisations have in the specific context of production. Syntactic and lexical aspects of language are not excluded from the analysis, but they are related to their function in the broader context of the texts and their production, not examined and compared *per se*.

When the discourse communities, the contexts of production, the social and discourse roles and the aim of the text-type are comparable, the functional aspects of its linguistic realisation are considered to be comparable across languages even when the actual syntactic and semantic devices found in the two languages differ.

In the following chapters, an overview of cross-linguistic comparative (or contrastive) analysis will be followed by a review of the research which has most contributed to the structuring of my approach to data analysis (Chapter 2). Then the context of production of the data will be discussed and linked to the text-type they

belong to (Chapter 3). Chapter 4 will discuss the type of data and the method of analysis.

The next section will define comparative analysis and connect it to the relevant literature in the field.

1.5. Comparative analysis: a definition of terminology

The comparative approach to written texts is divided into two main fields: comparative interlanguage research (interlanguage versus native language and interlanguage versus target language) and comparative analysis of two languages. The study of transfer at the level of discourse and pragmatics is part of interlanguage research (Thomas, 1983; Odlin, 1989; Stalker and Stalker, 1989; Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989; Blum-Kulka, 1997; Kasper, 1992; Mauranten, 1993; Blue, 1993; Ventola and Mauranten, 1996; Hinkel, 1997). Although interlanguage and transfer are beyond the scope of the present study, the research in the field constitutes a useful core component of the comparative literature.

A vast body of research has been produced in contrastive text-analysis of two or more languages. Contrastive text-analysis originated in the 1960's within the framework of the contrastive analysis hypothesis (Lado, 1957). According to the strong form of the hypothesis, foreign language learning was believed to be determined by the structure of the native language and, therefore, differences between the two languages were thought to be the cause of foreign learners' errors. The behaviourist theories underlying this hypothesis fell into disrepute when studies in universal grammar started to appear (Chomsky, 1957, 1965, 1968). As a consequence, a weak version of contrastive analysis was formulated: comparative studies cannot be considered predictive of foreign learner's difficulties, they can only offer explanatory hypotheses for some factors in learners' interlanguage. This

view still prevails in studies concerned with foreign/second language acquisition and learning.

There is another traditional field of comparative studies which is not concerned with language acquisition and learning, but focuses on rather more theoretical aspects of language: universals and their realisations in different languages. These studies focus on *langue*, rather than *parole*, and they will not be examined here. I will only mention that theoretical comparative linguistics developed in two independent directions: the typological tradition (Greenberg, Givón, Comrie, etc.), and studies in Universal Grammar (following the Chomskian tradition). A much older discipline within theoretical comparative studies is historical linguistics which dates back to the 19th century.

As mentioned before, the earlier studies stemming from a behaviourist framework were called 'contrastive analysis' and mainly focused on phonology, morphology, syntax and the lexicon. When the research started investigating larger stretches of texts, 'contrastive rhetoric' developed (Kaplan, 1966). The word 'rhetoric' was used to indicate the study of textual structures at inter-sentential level, rather than as the 'study of persuasive speech and writing' (Crystal, 1987). The label 'contrastive' has remained attached to rhetorical or textual studies comparing two or more languages even if the theoretical assumptions underlying research in the field have changed.

Whereas the term 'contrastive' tends to stress the differences between languages, recent studies have dealt with both differences and similarities when comparing sets of data from two or more languages and cultures (Matalene, 1985; Connor, 1987; Carrell, 1987; Purves 1986, 1988a; Reid, 1990; Mauranen, 1993; Ventola & Mauranen, 1996).

Some researchers, however, use the more general label 'cross-cultural' or 'intercultural' especially when examining spoken or written language produced by native speakers of different cultures (Thomas, 1983; Tannen, 1985b; Degenhart & Takala, 1988; Connor and Lauer, 1988; Connor, 1987; Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989; Ventola & Mauraanen, 1996; Blum-Kulka, 1997).

The label 'comparative' (adopted in this study together with 'cross-linguistic') is not frequently used (and therefore in the literature review I shall maintain the original terminology of the study referred to), but it better reflects the change of perspective that this field of study has undergone since the 1960s: the focus of the analysis has become the comparison itself, rather than just the differences between the languages. Additionally, at the level of discourse and pragmatics, the analysis is necessarily embedded in the cultural context of language production and therefore the research taps into cross-cultural or intercultural issues.

In this specific context the term 'culture' is used generically to indicate some social practices characteristic of a group of people and related to the context in which they are produced (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Scollon & Scollon, 1995). Referring to Hudson (1980: 70), Lyons gives this definition of culture: 'culture may be described as socially acquired knowledge: i.e. as the knowledge that someone has by virtue of his being a member of a particular society' (Lyons, 1981: 302).

Writing is a cultural and social practice which is influenced by and influences the context in which it is produced and used (van Dijk, 1997c).

The problem which follows from this definition of culture is how it is possible to compare written languages belonging to different cultural backgrounds. The next

chapter will broach this issue by reviewing some of the most relevant studies in the field of comparative discourse analysis.

CHAPTER 2

COMPARATIVE DISCOURSE AND THE RELEVANCE OF CONTEXTUALIZATION

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter some of the most relevant studies in comparative analysis are reviewed, some pedagogical issues are raised and the relevance of contextualization is discussed.

In the previous chapter the issue of comparability across cultures of texts written in different languages was raised as a crucial problem, but some of the early studies in the field only partly broached it.

2.2. The development of comparative discourse from the early stages

Since the present research focuses on university student writing, the studies reported here will mainly, but not solely, concern student writing or 'novice writing' (as it is also called), that is to say writing produced by non-expert and non-professional writers in the academic setting. The fast-developing research in the field investigates three broad interest-areas:

- writing as process: research focuses on the process of composing a written text;
- the written text as product;
- writing as a communicative event produced in a particular context for a set of specific purposes.

Given the discorsal focus of the present study, I will be mainly concerned with the research carried out in the last two areas though seminal research in language acquisition and language development will not be ignored.

Kaplan (1966, 1972) was among the first who adopted the contrastive analysis hypothesis to apply it at the textual level. His research, in which he compared rhetorical patterns used by foreign students writing in English with rhetorical patterns of L1 writing, became influential. His conclusions were that the 'thought patterns' underlying foreign learners' writing revealed differences which remained consistent within groups sharing the same native language. In his study, Kaplan focused on the structure of paragraphs which he considered 'logical units' revealing the thought patterns used by writers: he detected common features in paragraphs written by learners sharing the same L1 and represented them with simplified graphs. Kaplan believed that his findings could be adopted in the composition class, in order to instruct learners about paragraph structure in the target language.

The study had a positive influence on composition research because it emphasised the importance of the text as a whole, rather than as a collection of sentences. Kaplan's conclusions, however, were overstated and overgeneralised, as he himself admits in a paper published twenty years later (Kaplan, 1987). In many respects, his conclusions are rather close to supporting the strong version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (see Lyons, 1981: 303-312, for a critical analysis of the hypothesis).

A series of objections have been made over the years to Kaplan's argumentation:

1. The concept of 'thought patterns' is very controversial and too simplistically broached by Kaplan.
2. Student writing in a foreign language cannot be representative of a whole culture; the developmental aspect of student writing is not taken into account by Kaplan.
3. Kaplan does not speak of the variety of language usage in different text-types, but simply generalises from the one text-type he analyses.

4. Research has shown that the paragraph is not necessarily a 'logical unit', since the development of thought in a text is not always conveyed within units which respect the boundaries of this typographical device (see Hoey, 1983: 9-15).
5. Overt class instruction does not offer the immediate and obvious results that Kaplan seemed to imply. In other words, the processes of learning and teaching do not overlap, but interact dynamically (Allwright, 1984).

At the time, however, his conclusions were found intuitively appealing and this led to the pedagogical implementation of contrastive rhetoric in prescriptive writing instruction.

Although the progress of psycholinguistics in the 1970's proved that the strong version of contrastive analysis was at odds with findings in second language acquisition, and although the pedagogical validity of this field of study was undermined because its theoretical bases were becoming less stable, the 1970's saw the establishment of major contrastive projects especially in English and other European languages.

Contrastive analysis at the level of discourse, however, lagged behind. Its prescriptive beginnings and its influence on the writing class provoked a strong reaction among process-oriented researchers. Some completely dismissed contrastive rhetoric as lacking validity and, in spite of subsequent changes in comparative discourse analysis, it is possible to find similar dismissals even in papers published in the 1980's and 1990's (see Mohan & Lo, 1985; Taylor & Tingguan, 1991, for instance).

Early contrastive discourse analysis had a much more direct impact on foreign language pedagogy than its most recent developments (see Silva, 1990 for an

overview of second language composition instruction from 1945 to 1990) because contrastive rhetoric studies, as formulated in the mid-sixties, were applied prescriptively to the L2 writing class as if they had indisputable validity, whereas in the following years there was much more caution in using theoretical studies for the language class.

New scope was offered for the development of comparative studies by the publication of fundamental works in text-linguistics and discourse analysis such as van Dijk (1977, 1980), de Beaugrande & Dressler (1981), Brown & Yule (1983). The theoretical background and the pedagogical interface of research done in the 1980's in comparative discourse analysis have been remarkably different from those of the earlier publications. First and second language acquisition theories have superseded behaviourism and adopted a cognitivist approach and, as a consequence, L1 and L2 research in writing has offered new insights and suggested new practical applications (Flower, 1985; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1987; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987; Robinson, 1988; Kroll, 1990).

Following this general tendency, recent comparative studies show great caution in considering theoretical findings applicable to the foreign language classroom. In the 1980's and in the 1990's, researchers in comparative analysis offer only general suggestions for the L2 class, particularly if there has been no empirical testing to support the pedagogical validity of their hypotheses.

2.3. Present-day comparative analysis in L2 writing

A great number of studies focus on the analysis of L2 writing compared with native speakers' writing, along the lines of recent work by Kaplan (1987, 1988): Ostler (1987), Carrell (1987); Clyne *et al.*, 1988; Robinson (1988); Söter (1988),

Friedlander, (1990), Reid (1990), Campbell (1990), Carson et al. (1990); Adams *et al.* (1991); James (1993).

Research in L2 macro-level structures has great relevance for the pedagogy of writing. The problem faced by researchers in this field is the risk of overgeneralising the findings and drawing conclusions which go beyond the scope of the actual study. Ostler (1987), for instance, examines Saudi Arabian student writing in English and argues that her data conform to Kaplan's findings (1966) of different thought patterns across cultures. Ostler's study is accurately devised, but her conclusions are overgeneralised in that she relates the interpretation of her data to thought patterns of whole cultures (American English and Arabic) without considering the complexity of discourse communities and variety of text-types in the two environments.

When dealing with high-level structures and discourse units in texts, it is almost impossible to avoid relating them to specific discourse communities and contexts of production. L2 data, however, seem to present the researcher with a somewhat 'shifted' problem: the learners might well transfer L1 conventions, but they are operating in a foreign language (where developmental factors are overwhelmingly important) and, at times, in a foreign environment. For this reason, the L2 texts cannot be considered representative of the cultural background of the learners, even though some of their characteristics can be explained through the analysis of L1 conventions. Overgeneralising the findings of comparative studies in L2 might imply generalising across text-types (as can be the case in L1 research) or across languages. In the former case, specific conventions are arbitrarily extended to other text-types; in the latter case, the writing of foreign language learners is considered to shed light on features of the mother tongue at the thought pattern level. Since the boundaries between higher-level textual structures and thought patterns are neither

clear-cut nor simple to define, the issue of overgeneralisation is a taxing problem for research in this area.

Comparative studies centred on L2 data have attempted to test the hypothesis that L1 writing structures and skills can be transferred to L2 writing. However, Mohan and Lo (1985) argue that what is not typical of the target language might be due to lack of writing skills rather than to transfer. The issue raised by the two linguists is fundamental because the distinction between factors due to transfer and factors due to developmental aspects cannot be easily established.

The relevance of transfer from L1 to L2, as far as the macro-linguistic level is concerned, is a matter of contention. Whereas there are no conclusive studies which can clarify the issue, a number of papers demonstrate the occurrence of transfer of discourse structures or skills: Jones and Tetroe (1987), Söter (1988), Hall, (1990) among others. At the end of the 1980's Odlin remarked:

Although the evidence is still fragmentary, enough exists to indicate that transfer involving discourse can often occur in second language acquisition. (Odlin, 1989: 69-70)

More research focused on the discoursal level has taken place in the 1990's and has offered more evidence of the complexities of relating the L1 and the L2 (Bloor & Bloor, 1991; Richards & Skelton, 1991; Blue, 1993; Hinkel, 1997 among others). Mauranen (1993) shows the influence that L1 text-structures can have for different linguistic realisation in the L2 (Finnish academics writing in English), but she also argues (Mauranen, 1996) that good writing competence does not necessarily transfer into the L2 at the level of text-structure (thematization in particular) and that text-structures have to be actively taught in the L2 writing class.

2.4. Comparative analysis and process-oriented research

Present-day comparative discourse analysis has to come to terms with two main problem-areas: the first concerns criticism brought forward by process-oriented researchers, the second is a series of questions arising in research methodology.

Theoretical and empirical work done in a cognitivist process-oriented framework, highly influential in foreign language pedagogy, has shown that 'complex writing processes are not linear or formulaic but rather individual and recursive' (Johns, 1990: 26). The pedagogical consequences for the teaching of writing, both in L1 and L2, have been remarkable in that, within this framework, writing is viewed as a process and not a product, and therefore the focus is placed on the mental processes underlying the activity of production rather than on the finished product itself. Writing is seen as a problem-solving activity in which the learners should become able to guide their own creative process making extensive use of planning and revising strategies (Flower & Hayes, 1980, 1981; Flower, 1985; Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1987; Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1987). These strategies tend to give priority to macro-level structures and monitor sentence-level errors only at a later stage (Johns, 1990).

This cursory account of a complex body of literature (see Rowe Krapels, 1990, for an overview) is sufficient to show how a process-oriented pedagogy of writing is at odds with the traditional prescriptive pedagogy stemming from early contrastive rhetoric. In a foreign language class, the former approach would focus on the learners' writing process; the latter would teach the structures used, ideally, by native speakers of the target language. However, recent developments in comparative analysis have shifted the focus of attention and its research and aims can be considered not only compatible with a process-oriented approach, but also complementary to it.

Firstly, comparative discourse analysis has purposes which impinge upon but are different from theories of language acquisition or, indeed, composition and teaching composition. For this reason, its findings are not directly applicable to the foreign language class, even if this field of study retains a pedagogical validity which cannot be lightly dismissed and which will be discussed below. Secondly, recent research in comparative text-linguistics is no longer incompatible with a process-oriented approach.

Whereas process-oriented approaches to writing mainly concern psycholinguistic and cognitive aspects of language production, comparative discourse studies draw from a variety of domains, according to the purpose and the perspective of the research (see Purves, 1988b: 10-15). Sociolinguistics, pragmatics, ethnography, psycholinguistics, second language acquisition and learning contribute to different strands of comparative studies and, in turn, comparative research may contribute to different disciplines. In foreign language pedagogy, comparative discourse represents an invaluable instrument for raising awareness in the foreign language class. Comparative discourse has broadened its scope to encompass not only the product of writing, but also the context in which the texts are embedded: its participants, the discourse communities they belong to and the schemata they draw upon.

2.5. Issues of research methodology

As far as L1 comparative studies are concerned, there are some general problems which research has shown to be controversial and influence the choice of methodology.

1. In order to establish a comparison, it is necessary that the chosen text-type corresponds across cultures. In other words, not only does it have to exist in both cultures, but it should also be similarly represented in both cultures in quantitative terms. For instance, exhortational texts are much more common in Iran than in the U.S. (Houghton & Hoey, 1984): in this case a quantitative difference can produce an additional variable to be taken into account.

2. Some research has shown that generalisations of findings across text-types and even across sub-genres of text-types can lead to misrepresentations. Clyne (1984) reports that writing on maths and engineering in German and English share many more similarities than writing in chemistry because in the latter subject German writers make allowances for digressions much more than their English counterparts.

3. One of the most serious problems in comparative discourse studies is the choice of linguistic criteria which can be compared across languages, as can be seen in the variety of solutions put forward by the various researchers.

In order to cope with these issues, recent comparative analysis has enlarged the scope of its research, going beyond the texts themselves and expanding the field of investigation to encompass the context of production in which the texts are embedded (Leki, 1991; Mauranen, 1993; Ventola & Mauranen, 1996).

2.6. Investigating the context in which writing takes place: socio-cultural aspects

In the attempt to explore the broader context in which texts are embedded, some researchers primarily devote their attention to socio-cultural aspects of the texts they analyse. Their research branches out into three main directions:

1. investigation of style manuals;

2. investigation of writing within the education system;
3. investigation of the interrelation between texts and the cultural tradition.

2.6.1. Style manuals

Style manuals were used in the early days of contrastive discourse analysis in order to compare learners' L2 writing and the 'ideal' prose in the target language. This approach was abandoned when theories of interlanguage started to appear.

In recent times, style manuals of two or more L1s have been compared in order to explore the linguistic patterns in which native speakers are supposed to operate. This approach is exposed to some criticism and a few methodological drawbacks.

First of all, comparing style manuals cannot be equated with the comparison of native speakers' actual writing and it cannot be a basis for drawing generalisations about the prose production in a language. Secondly, the interpretation of style manuals is not always straightforward: concepts worded in similar ways might have different interpretations across cultures. For example, there are concepts (such as 'directness', 'concrete language', 'repetition', etc..) which style manuals often leave unexplained, and other concepts which might be perceived differently by native speakers of different languages: the word 'repetition', for instance, might be interpreted differently if the linguistic context favours elegant variation in prose or it favours repetition as a figure of speech (English and Mandarin prose respectively).

An additional problem is that style manuals are not as common in all languages and cultures as they are in English, or they may only exist for some specific text-types and not others (Kachru, 1988). In English, for instance there are many more style manuals than in Italian. Additionally, it is often the case that writing conventions as codified in style manuals are not dissimilar across the two languages, but they may

refer to linguistic models which do not necessarily reflect actual use. I list here some of the style manuals I consulted for English and for Italian for the present study. The manuals are either generic or aimed at academic writing and student writing (L1). I did not include texts adopted in secondary schools:

1. English: Irmischer, 1981 (3rd ed.), Barnet, 1985; Ellis & Hopkins, 1985; Peters, 1988; Björk, Knight & Wikborg, 1988; Williams, 1990; Smith & Smith, 1990; Jordan, 1990; Fabb & Durant, 1993.
2. Italian: Eco, 1977; Serafini, 1985; Bondioni, 1986; E.Di.S.U., Napoli 2, 1995.

2.6.2. Writing within the education system: school and university writing

The relationship between language, thought, and discourse will remain problematic, but the role of the school in promulgating rhetorical styles remains clear [...]. It serves as a primary agent in the transmission of cultural, and thereby rhetorical and stylistic, norms. (Kaplan, 1988: 13)

As Kaplan argues, the school system has a dominant influence as far as writing is concerned and therefore comparing class instruction and/or pupils' production can offer cross-cultural insights about the context in which student writing is embedded. However, whereas in English there is a rich body of literature about student writing and school instruction, in some cultures school writing is implicitly presented rather than explicitly taught, and therefore research materials might be unequally spread across the languages involved in the study. Eggington (1987), Hinds (1987) and Kachru (1988), for instance, report that in Korean, Japanese and Hindi overt instruction in school writing is very limited.

A common technique for obtaining comparable data consists in administering the same writing task across populations of students with different L1s. Bickner and Peyasantiwong (1988) and Indrasutra (1988) focus on comparing tasks familiar to school pupils belonging to the two cultures compared in their research (Thai and American English). The problem with these studies is the tendency to generalise the

scope of the findings: characteristics of school discourse can be certainly related to broader cultural features, but the complexity of a whole culture cannot be interpreted through student writing only.

A similar problem can be found in Purves & Purves (1986) and Purves (1986) who set out to investigate the 'national style' of 14 different countries. Whereas the adjective 'national' is infelicitous and the aim too vague, the positive aspect of this paper lies in some programmatic intentions of the study: Purves (1986) maintains that his type of cross-cultural study can raise the awareness of how conventions work in different rhetorical communities. Teachers of academic writing in a foreign language should realise that their students are being asked to be part of a rhetorical community whose conventions might be partly or completely unfamiliar to them.

Purves also draws an important distinction between focusing on conventions and focusing on 'the way to think and write' and argues that comparative studies which analyse textual, rhetorical and discourse aspects tap into the former, not the latter. This distinction reflects the difference between a socio-pragmatic approach and a cognitive approach to texts. As Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) maintain, it is not possible to decide what the process of writing is by looking solely at the product. As far as studies comparing L1s are concerned, it seems to me that drawing inferences on 'thought patterns' might more easily induce researchers to overgeneralise their conclusions and relate textual structures of a language to native speakers' way of thinking. Because of the variety of discourse communities and genres within the same language, one set of data, however large, cannot realistically offer a global description of patterns in that particular language, let alone an entity as complex and difficult to investigate as 'thought patterns'. Furthermore, generalisations in this sense are simply non-scientific and might produce the negative side-effect of stigmatising some cultures when they are compared with

others. Conversely, the socio-pragmatic approach allows an investigation of discourse conventions which are adopted (and shaped) by a specific community, for specific purposes and can be related to a well defined cultural context. This is the methodological direction taken by most of the latest cross-cultural studies (Horowitz, 1986a; Blum-Kulka *et al.*, 1989; Silva, 1990; Mauranen, 1993, 1996). In particular, the most recent studies concentrate on specific text-types and tasks within the school and academic system, accurately controlling variables and contextualising them.

In some cases, however, some researchers still link writing conventions and thought patterns. Duszak (1994) investigates academic writing in English and Polish at the discoursal level and relates it to 'intellectual styles' of English and Polish academics. Whereas her linguistic analysis is cogent and substantiated, the switch from the discoursal level to the cognitive level ('intellectual') is never explained.

Another important issue which stems from Purves (1986) relates to the fact that foreign students usually have to adopt the writing conventions of the academic or school environment in which they happen to study. However commonsensical this notion might seem (and Purves does not question it), it is not unanimously accepted.

Bizzell (1987) believes that there are two alternatives for learners writing in an educational environment which is not their own: one is learning (or acquiring) the unfamiliar set of conventions in order to be fully accepted as participants in that community; the other regards the tutors, rather than the students, and implies an acceptance of non-standardised academic writing (Bizzell focuses on university students).

The issue has become crucial in the last few decades because English is one of the most widely learned foreign and second languages in the world. This implies that more and more people use English and write in English and the acceptance of non-British or non-American writing conventions has become a burning issue for teachers, students and communities which use English as the language of communication. The relevance of English is also shown by the fact that the overwhelming majority of comparative studies, especially those related to academic and student writing, compare English and another language. This means that the comparative literature for English is extensive while it is much less so for other languages (including Italian).

The problem is complex because for non-native speakers who write in L2 the developmental aspect of interlanguage is intertwined with the difficulties of applying the writing conventions of L2, the possible positive or negative transfer from the L1, the ability to transfer writing skills and the knowledge of the propositional content. Sherman (1992) shows little understanding of the complexity of the task her Italian university students writing in English face and stigmatises them as prone to plagiarism and to learning by heart, unable to argue a point so that their written products contain 'all the universal signs of really futile writing' (ibid.: 194).

Hargan (1995), a lecturer in an Italian university like Sherman, argues that Sherman applies an anglophone tradition to the teaching of academic writing. Students have to be taught writing conventions because these are not universal, but contextually and culturally influenced. Hargan is also rather critical about the idea of imposing the same conventions of academic writing (in this case anglophone) on all Italian university students who write in English as a foreign language, since this would not be beneficial either to their language learning or to their academic development. She

also argues that it would be in the interest of academic discourse communities to include different ways of producing and transmitting knowledge (ibid.: 230-231).

Hargan's position is close to Bizzell's and reflects the relevance of linguistic diversity versus the danger of complete uniformity. The issue is controversial: it is more plausible to accept different writing conventions in English when the students are non-native speakers living in their home student community. In that case all the students are in a similar position and are therefore evaluated in a similar way for their written or oral performance. The problem is less clear-cut when a foreign student studies in another community. In that case it would be difficult to tease out problems which fall into the category of errors and features which fall into the category of cross-cultural variation. Moreover the student who studies in an English speaking country is likely to be highly motivated to learn the foreign language conventions of writing: to prevent this would be to deprive the student of a chance for learning.

What should be hoped in all cases is that people interacting with foreign language speakers or writers do not stigmatise their language production with impressionistic generalisations about a 'faulty' way of thinking or writing, but become aware of the complexity of using a foreign language and its conventions.

2.6.3. Interface between texts and the cultural tradition

Several studies have broadened the scope of comparative discourse in order to encompass the cultural tradition in which text-types are embedded, but not all have avoided the dangers of overgeneralisation.

Whereas Kachru (1988) and Indrasutra (1988) tend to draw general conclusions about cultures by looking at limited corpora of data, more interesting perspectives

are offered by two studies which look into the concept of reader and writer responsibility in different cultures (Hinds, 1987; Zellermayer, 1988). Hinds compares English and Japanese and concludes that whereas English is a 'writer and speaker responsible' language, Japanese is a 'reader and hearer responsible' language. Whereas in English the addresser is primarily responsible for effective communication, in Japanese it is the addressee who is primarily responsible for it. Hinds' argumentation offers interesting insights and wide scope for further investigation.

Zellermayer (1988) develops his research along a similar line comparing English and Hebrew writing (expository prose). His findings support Hinds' theory of the directionality of languages: according to Zellermayer, the same text-type requires more reader involvement to decode the message in Hebrew and more writer's cues in English for it to be acceptable to an American English audience. His conclusions, which tie in with Hinds' paper, do not try to explain the thought patterns of a culture on the basis of his data, but instead he contextualises his findings placing them within two cultural traditions. Therefore his perspective relates the analysis of texts to cultural conventions and not to thought patterns.

Thought patterns, cultural conventions and language are strictly correlated; however, present-day discourse analysis offers linguistic tools which can map, with various degrees of accuracy, language onto cultural conventions and social practices, conversely they are not adequate to map language onto the thought patterns of native speakers without running the risk of stereotyping cultures and languages. The cognitive level and the contextual level of language are interrelated, but the tools of analysis in the two fields are different and have different aims.

2.7. The context of production and comparative studies

The context of production has acquired relevance not only in research which investigates and compares cultural backgrounds, but also in studies which focus on linguistic aspects of texts. The acknowledged complexity of genres and sub-genres, the relevance of conventions within discourse communities, the notions of audience and intertextuality have become part of comparative discourse studies (see Robinson, 1988; Adams *et al.*, 1991; Ventola & Mauranen, 1996; Hinkel, 1997). It is precisely in this complex network of variables that the pedagogical validity of comparative discourse analysis lies (Leki, 1991). The learners of a foreign language have to operate within conventions of a discourse community they do not belong to, which implies both writing for an audience which has set expectations as far as genre conventions are concerned and reading texts produced within those constraints.

The focus of comparative discourse analysis has shifted from the text in isolation to the text in context. Rubin argues that

in writing, social forces constrain the writer at the same time as the writer interprets, and therefore constrains, social forces. (Rubin, 1988: 6)

Comparative discourse analysts have become aware of the variables contributing to defining the context of production and interpretation. Learners need to adopt new schemata or adapt old ones in order to operate within the foreign language community, both for the comprehension and the production of texts (Carrell, 1987; Carson *et al.*, 1990).

Once the relevance of language context and the scope of comparative discourse have been established, it is however necessary to acknowledge the relationship between context and individual perception and cognition. Context cannot be considered as an

objective, absolute reality which exists independently of people's perception of it. Van Dijk argues:

From a more cognitive perspective, one might indeed say that contexts are (socially based) *mental constructs*, or models in memory. Since meaning and other discourse properties are also mentally managed, this also explains the vital link between discourse and context: as subjective representations, mental models of contexts may thus monitor the production and comprehension of talk and text. (Van Dijk, 1997c: 16; italics in the original)

In pedagogical terms, comparative discourse analysis has two complementary aspects: one related to the teacher and the other to the learner (Kaplan, 1988; Leki, 1991). With regard to the learners:

1. they should be made aware that there are conventions which vary across cultures as far as different genres are concerned;
2. the audience of a discourse community has expectations which should be known by the students to reduce cross-cultural misunderstanding;
3. the simple awareness of cross-cultural differences does not necessarily produce results in comprehension and production, but it can reduce the feeling of individual inadequacy and ease the psychological burden of the learner;
4. sharing the conventions of a foreign discourse community might help the learner to feel a participant in it and understand better the requirements of that community (Leki, 1991).

Comparative discourse analysis is most useful, however, when it raises the teacher's awareness of production and comprehension in the foreign language:

1. it helps to make sense of some learners' errors;
2. it can contribute in several ways to a more efficient choice in the methodology of writing and reading: enhancing the sense of audience; clarifying the writing conventions for a particular genre within the discourse community which the learners are going to adopt; being aware of the notion of reader's or writer's

responsibility (Hinds, 1987); the teacher could help the learner develop or adapt their schemata of language production and comprehension;

3. it helps avoid stereotypes about thought patterns in non-familiar cultures;
4. it contributes to viewing writing and reading as activities in context, or, more accurately, as activities which reproduce and re-enact conventions stemming from specific discourse communities;
5. it helps the teacher consider grammar features in the broader perspective of text-production and text-comprehension.

Comparative discourse analysis is not a teaching methodology, but it can be pedagogically useful as a complementary discipline which sheds light on discourse as culturally defined and constrained by conventions and on the participants as re-enacting and continuously re-defining those conventions.

In the following chapters, I will first attempt to define the main variables of the context of text production: discourse community, text-type, addresser, addressee. Secondly, I will describe the data used in the present study in the light of these variables. Third, I will examine the method of analysis which is at the basis of the present study.

CHAPTER 3

STUDENT WRITING AS TEXT-TYPE AND ITS CONTEXT OF PRODUCTION

3.1. Introduction

The first part of the present chapter will introduce some fundamental concepts related to the context of production, in particular, a working definition of discourse community and genre; the second part will relate these concepts to the text-type of the data and its context of production.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the study of texts in context helps define variables for comparative research. This procedure contributes to establishing the nature of some of the conventions which are operational within specific communicative events, the expectations of the audience and the possibility the writer has of accommodating or ignoring those expectations and conventions. In other words, the producer of a text (oral or written) reproduces conventional features, recreates them and occasionally ignores them whether intentionally or not (Rafoth, 1988; Rubin, 1988; Clark et al., 1987). As a large number of cross-cultural studies in pragmatics and discourse analysis have shown (Thomas, 1983; Clyne, 1987; Connor, 1987; Hinds, 1987; Purves, 1986; Egginton, 1987; Zellermayer, 1987; Weir, 1988; Blum Kulka *et al.*, 1989; Bloor & Bloor, 1991; Richards & Skelton, 1991; James, 1993; Hargan, 1995; Hinkel, 1997), misunderstandings can be due not only to insufficient proficiency in the foreign language code, but also to insufficient knowledge of the linguistic expectations of the audience in a particular situation.

3.2. A definition of discourse community

The concept of discourse community is historically derived from the concept of 'speech community', as defined by sociolinguists and ethnographers of communication and it is related to the concept of 'interpretative community' in literary theory (Fish, 1980).

Bloomfield coined the term 'speech community' and described it as 'a group of people interacting by means of speech' (Bloomfield, 1933: 42); Labov (1966) recognised the relevance of 'shared norms', and several other scholars have investigated the issue: Gumperz (1968), Hymes ('sharing knowledge of rules of conduct and interpretations of speech', 1974: 51), Hudson (1980), Romaine (1982).

Derived from the notion of speech community, the term 'discourse community' was introduced in the early 1980's by composition researchers and then adopted by text linguists. Rafoth describes it as

a concept that would represent writers, readers, and texts as dynamically interactive, and thus help to (1) describe the interrelationship between discourses and their text, and (2) explain the constraints under which these relationships function. (Rafoth, 1988: 140)

Although there are obvious similarities between the notions of speech community and discourse community, Swales (1990) argues for the need to draw a distinction between them: the spoken and the written medium tend to influence the communication in different ways (goals, objectives, linguistic realisations, etc.). It is necessary to point out, however, that modern media of spoken communication (telephone, radio, television, recording, the Internet) tend to blur this distinction.

Swales' criteria for identifying a group of individuals as a discourse community can be used as a starting point for discussing whether the students constitute a discourse community or not. Swales argues that a discourse community:

1. has a broadly agreed set of common public goals;
2. has mechanisms of intercommunication among its members;
3. uses its participatory mechanisms primarily to provide information and feedback;
4. utilizes and hence possesses one or more genres in the communicative furtherance of its aims;
5. has acquired some specific lexis;
6. has a threshold level of members with a suitable degree of relevant content and discursual expertise; (adapted from Swales, 1990: 24-27).

Swales does not seem to accommodate fuzzy-edged situations (see Rafoth, 1990: 140, 145) and only cursorily mentions that there are 'conflictive discourse communities' which do not meet all the set criteria, and that there are differences in the extent to which a community is stable or in a process of development. Student communities, however, represent complex examples which cannot be explained as either stable or solely in developmental terms, as will be shown below.

The network of discourse interactions within a community is not limited to the acceptance and use of established norms and conventions. Rubin argues that 'schemata are by no means 'given', they are instead dynamically negotiated between members of discourse communities' (Rubin, 1988: 3). Several other researchers, particularly in the field of critical discourse analysis, have reiterated that discourse norms are not simply acquired by the participants, but also negotiated, recreated and, at times, challenged by them (Kress, 1989; Hodge & Kress, 1988; Clark et al., 1987; Ivanic, 1988; Fairclough, 1989, 1992b; van Dijk, 1997b).

There are, however, situations of discourse production in which participants have a reduced possibility of contravening or challenging established norms. One example is non-native speakers whose spoken and written production is limited by

insufficient competence in grammatical, pragmatic and social aspects of the foreign linguistic environment. Native speakers might find themselves in a similar position when they have to operate with unfamiliar discourse conventions. An extreme example of this can be the disparaging article published by a supporter of the Plain English Campaign against academic writing, allegedly one of the causes for our 'jargon-ridden society' (Lewis, 1997).

In a less emotional and more scholarly study, Bizzell outlines the problems of American 'basic writers' ('students who are least well prepared'; Bizzell, 1986: 294) who enter college and experience a clash between the discourse forms they are familiar with (often in non-standard American English) and the conventions of the academic world. Addressing the question of whether the students should actually accept the new norms and acquire them, Bizzell offers a tentative answer at the end of her paper:

[...] precisely because of the hegemonic power of the academic world view, my hypothesis is that [the students] will also find this acquisition well worth the risk. (ibid.: 301)

Bizzell's remark leads on to a related issue which characterises the academic and any other educational environment: the students' freedom to negotiate or, indeed, reject discursal norms is greatly reduced because they engage as participants in activities which can be defined as 'unequal encounters'. The label 'unequal encounter' is used in pragmatics and discourse analysis to indicate an activity-type in which the power of the participants is unequal, typical examples being the interaction between patient and doctor or employee and employer (Candlin, 1981; Gumperz, 1982).

In the academic setting, the relation between candidates / examiners presents some features of an unequal encounter because, prototypically, the examiners are fully-

fledged members of an academic community and are aware of its norms, whereas the students have to find their place within the same community and learn new discourse strategies. Furthermore, some of the activities the students engage in can be compared to 'gatekeeping encounters', that is activity-types in which one of the two participants controls or determines the access of the other participant to a valued objective, the typical example being a job interview. At some stage, the lecturer / teacher becomes an examiner of the student's work and the 'gatekeeper' of the situation. In addition, the negotiatory power of the students is greatly reduced by their own choice of entering the university setting, an initiative which implies a tacit agreement to acquire unfamiliar norms as part of the education process. Students typically leave the academic environment when they are supposed to have reached the highest point of development in both discourse and content schemata, which is counter-intuitive for non-educational discourse communities.

For all these reasons, students in an academic setting do not seem to form a discourse community as described by Swales, rather, they share conventions of different discourse communities and produce their writing for and within the academic community, while their status as learners justifies their limited competence in academic conventions. It seems more appropriate, therefore, to identify the scholarly setting as the main discourse community and the students as a special subset of it, a subset of people who share some of the discourse community conventions and bring to it norms which they possess in their background knowledge, but which belong to other communities (both discourse and speech communities). The students' discourse is far from homogeneous because it partakes of different discourses while it is produced within a specific discourse community and for an audience belonging to that community. Bartholomae (1985) analyses the writing about literature done by his own university students and comments:

My students [...] don't invent the language of literary criticism [...] but they are themselves invented by it. [...] They begin with a moment of appropriation, a moment when they can offer up a sentence that is not theirs as though it were their own. (ibid.: 145)

Bartholomae defines the students' discourse as an 'approximate discourse' which bears some resemblance to the 'standard official literary criticism' and usually develops towards it (without necessarily reaching it). The students, says Bartholomae in a semi-ironical tone, 'have to speak in the voice and through the codes of those of us with power and wisdom' (ibid.: 156).

From what has been said so far, it seems clear that the characteristics of the university students' community are diverse, in a state of flux and for the most part do not meet the six criteria defined by Swales. The community does not possess one specific genre, but it appropriates the norms of genres belonging to different discourse communities (criterion 4) and has sets of common public goals (criterion 1) which cannot easily be changed or negotiated. The students' writing contains conflicting and heterogeneous elements because it is produced within a developmental sub-set of the community.

The discourse communities within which the students operate in the case of the present study, are formed by academics and scholars writing about literature and teaching literature in Italy and in Britain. These two groups are broad and diversified; the variety of their writing output corresponds to several genres and sub-genres and is shaped by a long-standing tradition which the members of the community adopt, recreate and challenge. This tradition is culturally defined, and writing about literature in English and in Italian has different characteristics which are partly reflected in student writing; nevertheless, the two academic communities are comparable as far as Swales' criteria are concerned (Swales, 1990: 24-27).

As Bartholomae (1985) remarks, the students have to acquire and learn some of the norms of this community and address as equals the other main participants in the communicative event (the examiners) who are in a far more 'privileged' position with regard to the content and formal expertise in writing about literature.

Bartholomae detects an incongruence in the situation because the students are subjected to contradictory demands: first to acquire the conventional content and discourse norms and secondly to take a critical stand towards them having a limited negotiatory power. One of the hypotheses of the present study is that the personal critical stance and discursual independence that the students are allowed to demonstrate vary cross-culturally and linguistic evidence of this difference is represented by the types of interpersonal strategies used in student writing (person markers, modality, temporal and spatial deixis, evaluative strategies, etc.). If this hypothesis is confirmed by the data analysis, it is likely that students operating in a foreign academic environment would benefit from being aware of these differences.

The heterogeneity of student writing is due not only to the progressive acquisition of the specialised discourse of literary criticism (in the case of the data), but also to the use of conventions belonging to discourse communities outside the academic world. The students might utilise familiar strategies of secondary school tasks (personal essay, narrative, creative writing), a phenomenon defined by Eiler (1983) as 'interregister interference'. Or they might utilise norms of the speech communities they belong to: norms which are more typical of the 'oral' situation than of the 'literate' situation, as Tannen (1982b, 1985a) and Biber (1988) describe typical speaking and typical writing. As part of their linguistic training (explicit or implicit), the students will learn how to avoid these interferences which, in some cases, are considered discourse errors and developmental errors. A hypothesis

related to this issue is that academic communities differ cross-culturally in the extent to which they tolerate these register interferences in student writing.

In summary, this section has attempted to locate university student writing within a discourse community. Since the context of student writing is similar in Italian and in English, the comparison of the two sets of writing should shed some light on the following hypotheses:

1. the constraints on the development of student writing and the adoption of academic conventions vary cross-culturally.
2. the tolerance of interference of registers and conventions used by other discourse communities varies cross-culturally.

The next section will describe student writing in terms of text-type by outlining the concepts of register and genre.

3.3. Student writing in context

The concepts of genre and register have a complex history which varies according to the discipline in which they are investigated (linguistics, rhetoric, literary studies, etc.). The next section will give a working definition of genre and register in linguistics based on studies within the systemic approach. Section 3.3.2. will analyse the concept of genre and text-type and relate them to student writing and the data of the present study.

3.3.1. The interaction of register and genre within the systemic approach

In linguistics the relation between genre, register and text-type is not unanimously accepted. Systemic functional grammar is the linguistic field which has investigated these terms extensively and has offered a detailed but not always consistent

description for them (see Leckie-Tarry, 1994: 12-16 for an overview; Eggins & Martin, 1997 for a state-of-the-art article).

Halliday defines register as 'a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, mode and tenor' (Halliday and Hasan, 1989: 38-39). Field, tenor and mode are described in terms of 'context of situation', but the examples are derived from specific text-types considered in their entirety, and the differences between genre and register are left implicit.

Within the systemic school, it is Martin (1985) who offers a clear explanation of the relation between register and genre, arguing that the latter constrains the variables of the former (field, tenor and mode) and offers an articulated system of verbal means for fulfilling social purposes. As Eggins & Martin (1997) well summarise, the systemic approach emphasises the links between the organization of language and the organization of context; register is the intermediate level between the systemic metafunctions of language (ideational, interpersonal and textual corresponding to field, tenor and mode at the register level, see Section 3.4.1.) and the level of genre containing whole texts which achieve different social purposes in a specific culture.

The terms *register* (context of situation) and *genre* (context of culture) identify the two major layers of context which have an impact on text, and are therefore the two main dimensions of variation between texts. (Eggins & Martin, 1997: 251, italics in the original)

Along similar lines, Couture (1986a) provides even clearer definitions arguing that, while registers impose explicitness constraints at the level of vocabulary and syntax, genres impose additional explicitness constraints at the discourse level: 'Unlike register, genre can only be realised in completed texts' (ibid.: 82). Couture claims



that the reader of a text has expectations about the logical relation between these two aspects of discourse and the interpretation of textual messages is indeed influenced by this relation.

In authentic texts, however, there is a more flexible variety of combination between registers and genres than some studies (such as Couture, 1986a or the early systemic studies) seem to admit. Some texts are successful products of mixed registers within the same genre (advertisements are the most frequently quoted example) or a successful overlapping of genres (for example, advertisements written like personal letters or newspaper articles) (Fairclough, 1992a, 1992b). As mentioned in Section 3.2., student writing seems to fall into the category of text-types which are inherently heterogeneous in this respect, as will be discussed in the following sections.

Having sketched the difference between register and genre, it is necessary to establish how student writing and the data of the present study relate to these concepts.

3.3.2. Genre, text-types and student writing

In this section I shall address the question of categorisation of student writing and, more precisely, whether student writing can be considered as constituting genres or not. In order to investigate this issue, it is necessary to introduce a definition of genre which is consistent with the practical aims of this study: Swales (1990) seems to be the most appropriate for a number of reasons. First of all, his linguistic approach to the distinction between register and genre is compatible with the working definition given above; secondly, his approach to genre is deeply rooted in a view of language as both determined by social factors and influencing and recreating them. Thirdly, Swales focuses his study on the linguistic analysis of some

academic genres at post-graduate level (student writing). Swales' approach to genre seems, therefore, most suitable for the practical aims of the present study:

1. A genre is a class of communicative events. [...]
2. The principal criterial feature that turns a collection of communicative events into a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes. [...]
3. Exemplars of instances of genres vary in their prototypicality. [...]
4. The rationale behind a genre establishes constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their content, positioning and form. [...]
5. A discourse community's nomenclature for genres is an important source of insight. (Swales, 1990: 45-58)

The problem of accommodating student writing within specific genres arises on a closer examination of points 2., 3. and 4. To discuss these points, I shall use the umbrella term 'student writing' without distinguishing the different sub-types (examinations, essays, dissertations, theses) when analysing characteristics which are common to all sub-types.

First, student writing is not produced by a discourse community in its own right, as I argued in the previous section, but by writers who are a subset of a discourse community and have identifiable social roles and discourse roles within that community. Social role refers to the social relationship between one interactant and another, discourse role refers to the relationship between the interactant and the message (Thomas, 1988). Students' texts are heterogeneous pieces of discourse characterised by developmental features and usually approximating the expository or argumentative prose of academic discourse. Secondly, the communicative events underlying the sub-types of student writing might present purposes which are potentially conflicting rather than shared with the fully-fledged members of the academic community. Horowitz (1986b), Bartholomae (1985); Adams *et al.*, (1991), O'Brien (1992, 1995) are only some of the studies which show that it is a matter of debate the extent to which purposes are shared and overt for both sets of participants. There might be a mismatch in priorities between students and examiners: what is the relation between the proficiency in formal schemata and

content schemata? How do priorities differ for the two sets of participants? What is the relation between demonstrating knowledge of a subject and adopting a critical viewpoint of it? (Weir, 1988; Hamp-Lyons, 1988; Bloor & Bloor, 1991; Richards & Skelton, 1991; James, 1993).

Scardamalia and Bereiter (1987) and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) introduce the labels of 'knowledge telling' and 'knowledge transforming' to indicate two stages in writing development in psycholinguistic terms. An adaptation of similar labels could be metaphorically used to define university students' writing: reproduction of contents ('knowledge telling') and a critical and original re-elaboration ('knowledge transforming'). These, as Bartholomae (1985) argues, represent the two main requirements faced by university students. A balance between the two is part of the students' learning process, but it is difficult to define the extent to which this is a shared purpose between the participants in the communicative event and also whether 'knowledge transforming' is actually possible in examination conditions and in coursework writing. According to O'Brien (1992), examination conditions mainly allow knowledge telling to take place, whereas coursework essays allow knowledge transforming, if the student is able to reach this level of independent writing (O'Brien, 1992: 61).

An additional issue is the cross-cultural difference in communicative purposes of comparable writing assignments. The analysis of the data will show that the students need a certain competence in shared norms before they can effectively demonstrate their own critical stand. It is hypothesised that the level of competence varies cross-culturally, and Italian university students are required to have a higher competence in conventional norms, if compared to British students, before their own critical viewpoint is accepted by the examiners.

Elaborating on the concept of shared purpose, Swales argues that a recognition of purposes by the established members of the parent community provides the rationale behind a genre and its linguistic production (Swales, 1990: 52-53, point 4). This cannot be considered a characteristic of student writing for a number of reasons. First, there are shared purposes between the participants, but also purposes which are covert and conflicting; secondly, it is not possible to speak of 'parent community' as such, since the students form a subset of the academic community, but also adopt conventions from other speech and discourse communities (O'Brien, 1992). This contributes to the heterogeneity of students' discourse and the difficulty of defining it in terms of prototypicality (point 3 in Swales). The inherently developmental character of student writing makes the choice of prototypical examples controversial. It can be argued that evaluation criteria adopted by the examiners do not so much determine the prototypicality of what students write, as reflect the standard reached by the students judged by the examiners. In this respect it would not be accurate to speak of prototypicality, but it is possible to speak of a level of achievement accepted as a pass or more by a member of the academic community. The data used for this study are all papers accepted as clear passes, a criterion which respects the variety of linguistic solutions found in student writing and follows the examiners' evaluation criteria.

In summary, in the last two sections I have argued that the sub-types of university student writing cannot be considered as fully-fledged genres because they are too inherently developmental and heterogeneous. They have, however, common features and common developmental patterns which group them into text-types sharing similar elements: participants, setting for the communicative event, developmental goals, use of writing conventions.

I have also argued that students do not form a discourse community but are a socially definable group who produce their writing within the academic discourse community without being expert members of it; their lack of expertise in the dominant register is often replaced by the adoption of outside registers and conventions.

In the following sections I shall outline the complex interrelation of contextual aspects and I shall relate them to my data.

3.4. The main characteristics of student writing and the focus of the present study

In the sections that follow the contextual characteristics of student writing will be examined and the focus of this study on the interpersonal metafunction of language will be explained.

As mentioned in the previous section, several researchers have highlighted the uneven quality of student writing and have developed instruments of linguistic analysis in order to clarify what the characteristics of text-types produced by students are (among others, Eiler, 1983; Smith, 1986; Couture, 1986a; Bizzell, 1982, 1986; Péry-Woodley, 1989; O'Brien, 1992).

Whereas numerous genres and text-types show heterogeneity of register and genre conventions as an inherent characteristic (so inherent that it often goes unnoticed, Fairclough, 1992a, 1992b), in student writing this is a common feature but also one which is usually considered developmental rather than intrinsic. I would argue that the contextual configuration of student writing shows heterogeneity of registers as being both developmental and intrinsic. Contextual configuration, as defined by Hasan (Halliday and Hasan, 1989), is the combination of the three main variables in

a text: field, tenor and mode as related to the three metafunctions of language. A description of these variables may contribute to a better understanding of the nature of student writing.

Given the variety of text-types within student writing, I will focus mainly on the characteristics of the text-type analysed in my study: examination scripts written by second year university students following literature courses. Many characteristics of this text-type are common to all text-types of student writing, as the discussion will show. The following sections will introduce the concept of metafunction and the related concepts of field, tenor and mode.

3.4.1. The interpersonal metafunction

The term 'function' is rather ambiguous because it can have different meanings in different linguistic approaches. In general terms, function can refer both to the intentions of the addresser in using language and the effect language has on the addressee, either at a theoretical level or for a specific context.

The study of the main functions in language use has a long history and some of the seminal studies in the field are: Bühler (1934), Jakobson (1960), Searle, (1969), Hymes (1972), Halliday, (1973, 1979). A comparison of the categorizations offered by these scholars is beyond the scope of the present study (see Stern, 1983: 221-229; Leech, 1983: 46-58; Gregory: 1987), here I will only focus on the Hallidayan classification of language functions.

Halliday's description of language functions (or metafunctions) is based on the tripartite division of language:

- language as representation and as model of experience: ideational function (corresponding to field in register);

- language as exchange, enacting social relationships: interpersonal metafunction (corresponding to tenor in register);
- language as message: textual metafunction (corresponding to mode in register) (Halliday, 1994: 34-36).

The present study focuses on the linguistic realisations most closely related to the interpersonal metafunction (Halliday, 1994: 68-105) and therefore to the interaction between the participants and the linguistic activity they are engaged in. The three metafunctions are closely interwoven in discourse, but it is possible to observe and analyse some linguistic realisations which reveal more clearly than others the interpersonal use of language and the interaction among the participants in the communicative activity.

Halliday (1970, 1973, 1979) integrates the three metafunctions within grammar. Leech (1983: 56-58) argues instead that only the ideational function belongs entirely to grammar, whereas the interpersonal and the textual functions belong to pragmatics which studies language in relation to society and deals with relations between the world of linguistic theory and language as a social phenomenon (ibid.: 56). This is the perspective adopted in the present study.

As will be shown in the sections which follow, the interpersonal use of language is a variable which can offer insights, especially at cross-linguistic level, into the characteristics of student writing, and it can attempt to explain some aspects of heterogeneity in it. More specifically, the following are some of the questions which the study will attempt to answer:

1. To what degree is the presence of the student/writer overt or covert in her writing? To what extent does an overt presence of the addresser seem to be acceptable in the Italian and in the English data?

2. What kind of discourse role does the student writer construct for herself in the data?
3. Who is the audience of the texts? What role does it have in influencing the construction of the texts?
4. How do the social roles of the main participants (student / lecturer; candidate / examiner) impinge upon their discourse roles (writer / reader)?

The sections that follow will analyse field, mode and tenor in student writing. Tenor, related to the interpersonal metafunction, will introduce the concepts of audience and writer.

3.4.2. Field

The field of university student writing analysed in this study consists of literary history, literary texts and literary criticism. These categories feed into each other and a distinction between them is irrelevant for the purposes of the present study. I am using the three labels in a traditional and almost commonsensical way, although I am aware that the definition of 'literature' as such is a subject of debate in present-day linguistics (see Cook, 1994: 1-5). As Carter and Nash (1990) point out, there are books of fiction which are not considered literature (some popular fiction, for instance), and texts which are not fiction, but are traditionally considered as belonging to 'literature' (Donne's sermons or Milton's essays, for instance). Additionally, the concept of 'literariness' is not fixed, but has changed across the centuries. Even the line between literature and literary criticism is not easily drawn, and there are cases which are particularly difficult to categorise, an outstanding example being Wordsworth's Preface to the Lyrical Ballads.

For the purposes of this study, 'literature', 'literary texts' and 'literary criticism' are used as wide-ranging umbrella terms for complex concepts which are considered

in their prototypical, core meaning, rather than as potentially controversial. The issue at stake is not a definition of literature, but an analysis of how students tackle topics which are studied in university literature departments. As far as my data are concerned, all topics examined by the students belong, prototypically, to literature and literary criticism (see data description, Section 4.2. *et passim*).

3.4.3. Mode

As far as mode is concerned, the language of student writing is constitutive, that is an end in itself (as compared to other text-types or activity-types in which the language is just a means to achieving a goal, as in service-encounters). The medium is written language.

As will be explained in more detail in the introductory sections of Chapter 11, the text-type of the data is argumentative prose which is sometimes considered a sub-type of expository prose (Martin, 1985; Grabe, 1987) and sometimes as an independent register (Romani, 1992).

Argumentation uses language to justify or refute a standpoint, with the aim of securing agreement in views. (van Eemeren, Grootendorst, Jackson and Jacobs, 1997: 208)

The text-type is hypothesised to have mainly characteristics at the literate end of the oral / literate continuum as described by Tannen (1982b, 1985a) and Chafe (1982, 1985). In his study of oral and written language, Biber (1988) discards the image of a continuum and describes genres as presenting 'clusters of dimensions', that is clusters of recurring (and also, characteristically non-recurring) linguistic features at the level of morphology, syntax, lexicon and discourse. His quantitative analysis of written and spoken language describes genres by identifying clusters of dimensions:

1. 'Informational versus Involved Production';
2. 'Narrative versus Non-Narrative Concerns';
3. 'Explicit versus Situation-Dependent Reference';
4. 'Overt

Expression of Persuasion'; 5. 'Abstract versus Non-Abstract Information'; 6. 'Online Informational Elaboration' (Biber, 1988: 115). According to Biber, academic prose (the closest register to student writing in the study) 'taken as a single genre has a large range of variation on all six dimensions' (ibid.: 198), a conclusion which goes against the common assumption of academic prose as a well defined and coherent register. A similar conclusion is reached by Grabe (1987) in his statistical study of expository prose in English.

Neither Grabe (1987) nor Biber (1988) include student writing in their study. Biber (ibid.: 204) only mentions the heterogeneity and developmental characteristics of student writing.

The dominant mode of student writing is related to the register of 'humanities academic prose' which, in Biber's statistical analysis where it is considered a genre, not a register, has a high frequency of informational features ('frequent nouns, prepositions, attributive adjectives, long words, and high lexical variety'; Biber, 1988: 193), a high level of abstract, formal features (conjuncts, agentless passives, past participial clauses, *by*-passives) (ibid: 183; 192-195).

As is shown by O'Brien (1992: 202-204), within the dominant mode belonging to academic prose (more specifically humanities academic prose), it is possible to find in student writing textual features typical of oral language used in face-to-face informal interaction. The definition of oral face-to-face interaction is not uncontroversial, however.

For the sake of simplicity, I will consider here Chafe's description of its characteristics (Chafe, 1982, 1985). Chafe bases his analysis on four characteristics which can be found in different combinations in typical writing and typical speech

(expository prose and face-to-face conversation). 'Integration' and 'fragmentation' refer to the way in which information is conveyed through language: the former means that information is carefully conveyed in a limited number of words; the latter that information is conveyed in a less compact manner usually because of time constraints in language production and channel constraints (non-prepared speech, for instance). The other two notions, which have an interpersonal relevance, are 'involvement' and 'detachment': the former implies a closer interaction between participants, the latter implies a less direct interaction and, most often, a 'delayed' one (written language). Each one of the four notions is characterised by several recurrent linguistic features and these combine in a variety of ways in different situations of production. For example, student writing produced in a limited span of time (examinations) tends to be more fragmented than writing produced under less demanding time constraints (essays, dissertations).

The issue of involvement and detachment has been only cursorily mentioned here, but it is necessary to highlight that Besnier (1994) and Caffi & Janney (1994) criticise the impressionistic use of the word 'involvement' in the linguistic literature and try to redefine it in a more precise way as a descriptive and theoretical tool. For the purpose of this study, however, I will only acknowledge the limited scope of Chafe's study, but retain here his definitions. The relative acceptability of detachment and involvement and the use of 'emotive language' (Caffi and Janney, 1994) in student writing is hypothesised to vary cross-culturally and Italian students' texts probably contain fewer linguistic features related to involvement.

The presence of features which are typical of oral interaction in student writing are probably due to two main factors:

1. the situation of production (time constraints, relation between participants, etc.);
2. limited knowledge of the textual conventions required for academic prose.

Whereas the latter factor is developmental, the former is intrinsic to the communicative event.

3.4.4. Tenor

Tenor is a distinctive variable in student writing because, whereas field and mode share many characteristics with academic prose, the social and discourse roles of the participants are a discriminating factor in the description of student writing in general terms and cross-linguistically.

Students / candidates and lecturers / examiners occupy the main participant roles in students' writing, as actual addressers and addressees, writers and real audience respectively. The interpersonal function in university student writing is often overlooked because the register of language tends towards an impersonal presentation of facts, events and arguments, and is less overtly interactional than other registers. However, as Besnier (1994: 286) argues, even in scientific academic discourse (one of the most abstract in English as defined by Biber, 1988: 194) it is possible to find high personal involvement disguised as 'reason' by means of conventionally acceptable rhetorical strategies.

Student writing has an interesting network of interpersonal strategies due to its specific situational context: in the next two sections the concepts of audience and writer will be discussed.

3.4.4.1. The concept of audience

The concept of audience has a long history which can be traced back to Greek philosophy and its theories of rhetoric (for an overview see Willey, 1990; Willard & Brown, 1990) and the studies related to it vary according to the branch of linguistics investigated. The analysis of audience in fiction, for instance, (Booth,

1961; Ong, 1975; Fish, 1980; Leech & Short, 1981; Holub, 1984, among others) is likely to acknowledge the basic fact that 'the reader of fiction is more willing to play or to accept a wider variety of roles than is the reader of non-fiction' (Long, 1990: 83). The present section is an account of audience in student writing.

Barry Kroll (1984) presents three views of audience which were current and influential in the 1980's and still have repercussions in present-day linguistics. He defines these perspectives as 'rhetorical', 'informational' and 'social'. The first is the traditional way of interpreting audience: writers and speakers analyse the characteristics of their audience so that the message can be adapted to them. The informational perspective views the writer's purpose as conveying the message as effectively as possible to the reader. The social perspective sees the reader as a 'constructive participant' and the writer as a participant who should develop a 'sense of audience' through anticipating readers' response. Kroll realises that each of the three perspectives is limited and limiting if taken in isolation and argues that the concept of writer's audience is connected to a sense of genre and convention and concludes that the 'sense of audience' should be investigated within a cognitive framework which envisages writing as an exploration of ideas. His conclusion is a tentative indication that there could be potential developments in the field.

Ede & Lundsford (1984), who consider the question from the point of view of composition theory and pedagogy (as Kroll does), carry the question of audience one step forward and introduce a distinction which has since been an issue of debate. They argue that there are researchers who see the audience as 'addressed': they are concerned with actual readers, and, according to them, it is relevant for the writer to have a knowledge of his/her real audience's expectations. This perspective fails to recognise the complexity of the writing processes and its creativity (see Flower and Hayes, 1980). Other researchers view audience mainly as 'invoked',

that is as a 'fiction' of the writer (Ong, 1975): the reality of the readers is not denied, but the possibility of the writer knowing about their expectations is seriously questioned (this view is confirmed by the results of Weir's study of the mismatch between the opinions of lecturers / examiners and students about what is relevant in the evaluation of student writing (Weir, 1988)).

Ede and Lundsford (1984) acknowledge this complexity and the limitations of viewing the positions of writer and reader as a dichotomy. They envisage, therefore, the necessity for a synthesis: 1. the writer is a reader of his or her own work; 2. the processes of reading and writing are a creative and dynamic duality whereby writers create readers and vice versa. O'Keefe and Delia (1988) re-elaborate these assertions in favour of a creative interrelation between writer and audience, focus on the heuristic qualities of the process of writing in composition theory and the complex interrelation between participants and communicative event and pave the way for further developments in the concepts of audience (Rafoth and Rubin, 1988; Rubin, 1988; Kirsch and Roen, 1990).

For the scope of the present study the most recent developments, however, are only peripherally relevant: Rubin (1988) re-assesses the relevance of the audience for expository student essays and argues that the 'addressed audience' does not matter because the students have to learn what counts for the academic community not for the 'addressed audience'. Not only is this statement circular because the examiners belong to the academic community, but also it is not confirmed by empirical studies (see O'Brien, 1992: 36, 63): through interaction with the lecturers / examiners the students learn the conventions of the writing task. In other words, examiners represent a constraint, but their discourse role as audience and interactive participants in the students' learning process provide irreplaceable elements in the communicative events.

One of the most evident features of this role is the high level of 'intertextuality' in student writing. The term 'intertextuality' in this context is limited to the students' use in their writing of information which has previously been given to them in lectures, seminars or personal communications by their lecturers (Porter, 1986; O'Brien, 1992: 89). This particular source of information is distinct from any other type of reporting or quoting because usually it is not acknowledged and is accepted as one of the conventions of student writing. 'Intertextuality' is also so closely interwoven with the students' own texts that it is difficult to identify it and can be considered an inherent characteristic of student writing. The issue of 'intertextuality' would offer scope for an interesting comparison between languages and cultures, as far as its quality and quantity are concerned, but it would involve a whole separate programme of research centred on this problem. For the scope of the present study, the phenomenon has been mentioned for the following reasons:

1. it can be classified as an interpersonal strategy in the language of student writing;
2. it contributes to the heterogeneity of student writing and often gives an uneven quality to students' texts;
3. more importantly for the overall topic of this section, it represents one of the clearest phenomena demonstrating the relevance of the concept of audience, the interaction between students and lecturers (as teachers) and the 'dialogic' quality of student writing.

Whereas the discourse role of the lecturers / examiners is part of the concept of audience, their social role in relation to the students is three-fold: as scholars and members of the academic community they provide the students with conventions and norms which they themselves have adopted, re-produced and re-created; as teachers they provide the students with some of the materials and methods of critical analysis which will be appropriated and intertextually re-created; as evaluators /

examiners they provide the students with feed-back about their writing and an evaluation of it.

It is possible to say, therefore, that the student writers are shaped both by the 'addressed' audience, their examiners, and the 'invoked' audience, a more abstract and institutionalised notion of academic community. Ede and Lundsford's categories are here re-introduced in a new and more interactive way.

The main discourse role of the examiners in students' writing is that of 'audience addressed'. However, their social role of scholars and members of the academic community makes them also representatives of the 'audience invoked' which is partly the scholarly community, but also the university as an institution in society. The continuity between audience addressed and audience invoked is represented by the examiners' discourse roles.

The concept of 'audience invoked' in student writing is particularly important because it informs the main mode of the writing and provides the students with some of the conventions they have to operate in. It also represents an important common characteristic of both scholarly writing and student writing with the difference that for scholars the academic community is also 'addressed'.

To a certain extent, the concept of audience invoked shares similarities with Ong's audience as a 'fiction' (Ong, 1975): first of all, the students acquire this sense of audience by reading articles produced by the scholarly community and by creating themselves as 'fictionalised readers'; secondly, audience can be considered a fiction for the students because they actually do not write as scholars but 'as if' they were scholars (Bartholomae, 1985). The students interact with some representatives of the audience invoked (the lecturers / scholars) and they receive overt training in the

conventions of academic writing as potential 'apprentices' to the community (Bizzell, 1982).

At this point it is clear that the labels 'addressed' and 'invoked' do not identify a dichotomy, but a continuum which involves both addresser and addressee. As O'Keefe and Delia (1988) argue, it is not the audience which establishes constraints on the reader, but it is the communicative event itself which imposes constraints on the participants. Both writers and readers participate in the construction of written texts: the audience (addressed and invoked) provides part of the contents and discourse schemata which the students re-elaborate, and, at the same time, the students shape the audience in their writing, inducing it to make allowances for their lack of complete competence in conventions and norms.

The overlapping categories of audience invoked and addressed have been introduced because they are hypothesised to have a cross-cultural relevance in student writing: that the emphasis on one category or the other seems to vary between cultures. One hypothesis to be tested in this study is that in the Italian data the 'audience invoked' is more conventionally relevant than the 'audience addressed', if compared to the data in English. This type of analysis will involve also the concept of writer which is the topic of the next section.

3.4.4 2. The writer as addresser

The complexities of audience in student writing can shed some light on the concept of addresser and authorship.

A definition of authorship is found in Phelps (1990):

[...] text is a pastiche of voices and texts drawn from cited sources, conversations, language overheard, language borrowed. But if the text is so constructed (is intertextual), so is the author. Memory and consciousness are peopled by the ideas, actions, and words of others; all language is initially

'borrowed'. With this inexorable slide toward an author who is herself constituted from texts and as a 'text', the boundary between audience and authorship has disappeared. (Phelps, 1990: 158-159)

Phelps's viewpoint reveals the problematic nature of the concept of authorship. Her remarks seems to be confirmed by the characteristics of the latest technology of text production: hypertexts and the Internet enhance the inherent intertextual quality of texts and the disappearing boundary between reader and writer.

According to Phelps, the 'disappearing boundaries' constitute a dilemma for the pedagogy of writing, since it is not possible to teach composition (essay writing in particular) if this is not presented as a purposeful activity done by a concrete subject (ibid: 162-163). To solve the problem, Phelps abandons the viewpoint of situational context and argues for the importance of introspection: people, when writing, perceive themselves as authors; readers usually attribute meaning to authors and authorship is, therefore, 'an act of taking responsibilities' (ibid: 164).

In student writing, the heavy use of 'intertextuality' (see previous section) would seem to undermine even more the notion of authorship by blurring the boundaries between addresser and addressee, and by adding a further layer of dialogic relation between them.

This type of 'intertextuality' is an accepted convention of student writing and seems to have a cross-cultural specificity in the way 'voices' appear in the students' texts as analysed in Chapter 10. The developmental quality of student writing and the fact that learning should take place through writing allow a notion of authorship which, however blurred and complex, is generally more flexible than for other text-types.

As with audience, authorship is influenced by the social and discourse roles of the participants. The main social role of the student is that of learner within the

university setting. Whereas in terms of power relation this role is far less authoritative and prestigious than any role of fully-fledged members in the academic community, the developmental quality of this role allows the students to re-create themselves in discourse roles which do not strictly correspond to their social role. The other social role of the students bridges the gap with the academic community: they can be 'apprentices' within the community. In theory all students are apprentices, realistically only a limited number consciously aspire to membership of the academic community in the humanities. In other fields (such as medicine or accountancy), all examination candidates are aspiring entrants to the profession of the examiner and the majority will become part of that discourse community.

The discourse roles of students derive from their social roles: they learn and are evaluated through their writing; as learners, they are allowed to assume the role of reader and critic of literature (in the case of the data of this study) to be an 'apprentice' of the community. This latter discourse role is for the majority of students just a 'fiction'. The two discourse roles are dynamically related since a characteristic diachronic variation in student writing tends to shift the relevance of discourse roles from the former to the latter. The concept of writer is a dynamic continuum whose relations with the audience changes over time.

The students are constrained by conventions because they cannot invent the discourse of literary criticism, but they have to invent themselves as writers of a community they do not belong to, addressing a real audience who has a much wider knowledge than they have as far as the content and formal schemata of literary criticism are concerned. Additionally, they have limited negotiatory power to change or challenge those conventions because they are not members of the scholarly community, but their social role as learners allows them to use the conventions of a discourse community without completely mastering them and, to a

certain extent, to use conventions from other discourses (secondary school writing, face-to-face interaction, media discourse, etc.).

Two main issues stem from the fact that students assume the discourse role of expert members of the community: one relates to the type of task they have to perform, and one to the cross-cultural difference in the use of conventions.

As far as the first issue is concerned, it is clear that the tasks students are set are usually different from the genres belonging to the scholarly community and the type of writing an experienced writer would engage in. As Horowitz (1986a) points out, criticising the application of a strict process approach in composition classes for university students, the students are asked to produce their university written work in conditions which differ from those that apply to writing articles for publication. Several drafts, revisions, discussions with peers, exchange of information, etc. are not always a viable solution for students and sometimes such procedures are downright prohibited (as in examinations) or stigmatised as plagiarism. Student writing and scholarly writing, informed by different purposes, characteristically present different situations of production and different relations between the participants. Accounts of scholarly writing, its process and procedures (Ede & Lundsford, 1984: 167-168; Tomlinson, 1990; Nash, 1990) show that student writing might share linguistic conventions with the scholarly community, but not its situation of production.

The second issue has a cross-cultural relevance. Bartholomae (1985) remarks that the stages of development in student writing range from simply stating their presence within the field of the subject to 'claiming their authority by placing themselves both within a discourse and against a discourse' or claiming 'an interpretative project of their own' (ibid.: 158). The last stage is the nearest

approximation to scholarly writing (with all the contextual differences already examined). A hypothesis which will be tested in the data analysis, concerns the degree of opportunity given to the students to express themselves in a more critical and independent way. The threshold level of knowledge concerning content and formal conventions which allow the students to reach 'an interpretative project of their own' (ibid.: 158) seems to be different in the Italian data and in the English and so seems to be the relation of the student to the academic discourse community. It is hypothesised that the Italian students tend to rely more on the authoritative voices of the academic community, expressing their own arguments in a more tentative way than the English students.

In this section, the concept of authorship has been introduced, discussed and linked to the situational context of university student writing and the addresser's discourse roles (learner and reader and critic of literature) have been shown to be related to the sub-categories of audience, to depend on them and, to a certain extent, to condition them.

The data analysis will show how the concepts outlined in this chapter can be investigated by looking at the linguistic features used by the students in their texts. The next chapter, therefore, will discuss the choice of data and the method of analysing them.

CHAPTER 4

DATA AND METHOD OF ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

This chapter is divided into two main parts: the first focuses on the criteria used to choose the data and the second on the method of data analysis and the linguistic variables of the framework of analysis. At the end of the chapter, the hypotheses which are at the basis of this study will be summarised.

4.2. The data

4.2.1. Main criteria for choosing the two sets of data

As mentioned in Section 3.4.1., the analysis focuses on the discoursal aspects which are most closely related to the interpersonal metafunction of language. One of the main hypotheses in the present study is the relevance of this metafunction in a cross-linguistic comparison of a text-type of student writing (examination scripts) which is considered to be rather 'impersonal' and not particularly interactive.

The data chosen for the analysis are non-elicited, naturally occurring data in their context of production. The study is focused on the cross-linguistic differences which may arise (and may become problematic areas) for students and lecturers confronted with non-familiar conventions related to the interpersonal metafunction. Whereas only naturally occurring data could offer insights in this area, using natural data can be also seen as a controversial choice because there are variables which cannot be controlled in non-elicited data.

As many variables as possible have been controlled: both sets of data are examination papers set at the end of the second year of university study and written in examination conditions (under the supervision of the examiners, limited time, no

textbooks available), they are set on topics dealt with in the second year of course at the universities of Edinburgh (Scotland) and Udine (Italy). Both sets of data are written by native speakers of the language about the literature of their own native language (to avoid interference with foreign language literatures). They are argumentative pieces of writing (see Chapter 11, Section 11.2.1.), they belong to the same text-type and a comparable context of production (see Chapter 3).

The text-type of examination answers has been chosen for analysis because it is the most comparable piece of student writing produced in both Italian and British universities. The Italian university system of evaluation gives emphasis to oral examination and therefore coursework essays are not easily comparable in the two settings because they are a marginal feature of evaluation in Italian universities. On the other hand, the dissertation that some students write in the final year of their university degree in Britain cannot be compared to the more complex and longer *tesi* (thesis) that Italian students are compelled to write at the end of their degree.

The variables which could not be controlled in the two sets of data will be examined and discussed in the interpretation of data analysis. First of all in the Italian university system, the written examination (if successful) will be followed by a thorough oral examination testing the students' overall knowledge of the topics covered during the course and included in the programme. The English paper is one of the written examinations which test the knowledge of the students. As will be shown in the analysis, this variable seems to be rather unimportant for the interpretation of the findings.

The second variable is more relevant because it involves a difference in time constraints. The British students were given much less time than the Italian students

for writing: two and a half hours to answer three questions (the complete scripts range from 1200 to 2500 words); British students have very little time for planning and revision. Italian students, instead, are given 5 hours to write essays which range from 800 to 1600 words. In this case planning and revision are considered possible and necessary. However, part of the time given to the Italian students is devoted to copying the first draft into a final draft (both versions are handed in). Since changes from one version to the other are rarely substantial and major restructuring is virtually non-existent, this can be considered a time-consuming accepted convention rather than a genuine re-editing. Only the final drafts, the texts which are evaluated, have been used as data.

Two strategies have been used to limit the influence on the analysis of the time variable which could not be controlled. First of all the linguistic features analysed are only indirectly influenced by the time variable, as the analysis will show. In the cases in which the time variable might have influenced in some ways the linguistic feature analysed in the study, this issue will be mentioned and discussed.

In order to analyse examination essays of similar length and similar type of task (argumentative essay) only one task out of the three given to the British students has been analysed (Appendix 1 reports the examination tasks of the scripts analysed in the study).

The present study is not normative, but descriptive, therefore it does not mention the quality of the students' work (and the mark the paper was given). The sets of data are a random choice of examination scripts of all levels of achievements from clear passes up to excellent marks, represented in similar proportions in the Italian and the English scripts. Clear passes were 55% in Edinburgh University (at the time

the examination took place), excellent marks were 75% onwards. The pass mark in Italy is 18/30, but Italian lecturers and examiners suggested that only papers which had scored from 20/30 onwards should be analysed to have clear passes; they also suggested that excellent marks in that specific written examination started from 26/30. The choice of examination scripts which scored a clear pass or more has been prompted by the fact that the examiners recognised those scripts as having reached at least a sufficient level of proficiency to meet the aim for which these texts were produced in the first place.

4.2.2. The scope of the study

The sample of texts used in the present study is rather small because the analysis has been done manually. Since the focus of the study is discoursal and pragmatic, the framework of analysis is based on categories which are influenced by the textual environment in which the linguistic device is found and, in some cases, by the whole script. A computerised analysis was therefore not viable. In the case of a manual analysis the sample is usually necessarily more limited than in a computerised analysis and has a reduced representativity in statistical terms. However a manual analysis can handle linguistic phenomena which would escape a computerised programme, especially in the field of discourse.

In the present study, 25 English scripts (17832 words in total) and 20 Italian scripts (21330 words in total) have been examined. The sets of data have a limited statistical validity, but they have been chosen to be representative for comparative purposes. I will not imply at any point, however, that my data or my findings are representative of Italian and English student writing as a whole: university student writing is too complex a phenomenon to generalise findings. It can be said, however, that the sets of data are representative of a specific text-type (and

therefore context of production) in a specific field (literature) in the two languages. 'Representative' is used here to identify trends and tendencies, rather than offering complete descriptions.

Some aspects of the findings can be also hypothesised to be characteristics related to wider-ranging linguistic and cultural issues within the two languages. This, however, will never imply cognitive issues of language production (or 'thought patterns') because tools different from those used in the present study are necessary for a research within the cognitive domain.

A core problem arising in the comparison of two languages is the extent to which the linguistic and the cultural levels can be told apart in discourse and pragmatics. In the present study, the tools of analysis are linguistic not cultural and therefore issues are investigated from the linguistic viewpoint related to the context of production. The contextualisation of language production establishes the link between the focus on linguistic issues and some related cultural aspects.

4.2.3. Some conventions used in the data analysis

The different scripts belonging to the sets of data are identified with their progressive number and the letter E for the English scripts and I for the Italian scripts. English means throughout English written by a British native speaker. Italian means native speaker Italian. The stretches of texts quoted from the scripts are identified by the letter and number of the script they belong to and the numbers of the lines from the text. For instance: E11-34-45 refer to lines 34-45 in script E11. When the analysis requires it, a new paragraph is signalled with the sign #. When the boundary of the paragraph is not entirely clear, as in some Italian scripts, the sign will be ?#. The scripts can be found in Appendix 2 and their transcription is

verbatim, without error corrections unless the examiners signalled errors while marking (in this case error and correction are both reported). Throughout the thesis the feminine gender will be used for pronouns and possessive forms referring to the student writer, given that the overwhelming majority of literature students are female (and more so in Italy than in Britain).

The passages quoted in the thesis from the Italian scripts are translated into English. The translation is as close as possible to the Italian original because its aim is to show the environment in which the linguistic structures are used.

The examination tasks can be found in Appendix 1. The English tasks consist of a quotation and the request to discuss for or against it. The Italian task implies a similar type of mand (discussing for or against a specific literary issue), but it is expressed as a question. In both cases the examination 'question' is not a prototypical request of information on the part of the addresser (who is supposed to know more than the addressee about the topic): the examination 'answer' is relevant to both participants because it is elicited to assess the ability of the candidate to construct an argumentation (see Sections 10.2. and 11.8.4.1.).

4.3. The method of analysis

Given the focus of the study on discoursal features, the manual method of analysis and the limited sample of data, the study is qualitative and, as mentioned in the previous sections, the comparison focuses on linguistic tendencies of language use rather than on clear-cut characteristics. The quantitative observations do not have a statistical significance *per se*, but as results which can contribute to the qualitative analysis because quantitative observations offer an overview of linguistic phenomena that can be missed by using a qualitative approach exclusively.

The quantitative analysis (within the limits specified above) has been carried out per number of words for all linguistic variables. This choice was motivated by the difficulty of finding a cross-linguistic point of reference as far as percentages are concerned. All phenomena examined here have a discoursal relevance, therefore their function(s) go beyond the boundaries of phrases, clauses and sentences. The real unit of analysis is the whole text (the student's script) which is used in the qualitative analysis. Since the quantitative analysis contributes to a global vision of texts across single main units and given that no smaller unit than the text was really suitable for the quantitative analysis, for practical purposes the smallest immediately identifiable unit was used as the default unit: the word.

The object of analysis, the interpersonal use of language in its variety of realisations, has been examined from different linguistic perspectives. Each perspective contributes to revealing the complexity of the interpersonal use of language in the text-type of the data.

The main viewpoint of the analyst, however, is similar to that of the reader of the text (but it does not overlap with it) because it examines the texts from the same end of text production. This choice has been motivated by the fact that the study is based on discoursal features and on the response that the reader may have to the writing conventions used by the students. Cross-validation of findings using other analysts' perspective has not been possible for the present study. The individual arbitrariness in the interpretation has been limited by analysing the whole body of data several times over a long period of time.

4.3.1. The method of analysis and the interpersonal metafunction

Whereas the interpersonal metafunction as the focus of analysis is a concept derived from Halliday (1973, 1978, 1979, 1985, 1994, see Section 3.4.1.), the actual linguistic analysis of discoursal features is more eclectic and draws from different fields of discourse and pragmatics. An eclectic study, less unified and homogeneous, is motivated by the necessity of choosing linguistic categories which are comparable across languages. The problem of finding comparable linguistic categories at the discourse level was particularly crucial in the comparison of English and Italian because the former has a rich and well-established literature in the field, while the latter has a smaller and less traditionally established discourse literature. A strictly functional systemic approach was not viable because the relevant literature has mainly investigated English, not other languages.

In fact there is no standardised method of analysis for the present type of research. The framework of analysis used here has been developed for the requirements of the task in hand and is the result of adjustments made during the study itself. It can be considered an attempt at offering a cross-linguistic framework of analysis which works for English and Italian and which may yield insights into the way student writers use interpersonal aspects of language.

The study, however, does not aim at isolating the interpersonal use of language since the different functions of language interact and are interrelated in text. The aim of the analysis is therefore to investigate those linguistic features which better reveal the interpersonal use of language. The starting question was: what are the linguistic phenomena belonging to the interpersonal metafunction? It soon became clear that the answer to this question would have led to the fallacy that it is possible to isolate one function from the others. Therefore the actual operative question is:

- What are the linguistic manifestations at the discoursal and pragmatic level of the main characteristics of the interpersonal metafunction?

From this viewpoint, the framework was developed by considering the most salient linguistic features which can be described cross-linguistically because they have corresponding linguistic devices with a comparable discoursal function in the other language (not necessarily morphologically and syntactically similar). By salient is meant relevant in terms of occurrence or lack of occurrence in the analysed text-type in both languages.

The linguistic categories in the framework draw from all three Hallidayan metafunctions (ideational, interpersonal and textual), but they are designed to highlight the interpersonal metafunction and the complex of textual and contextual variables which are connected to it.

4.3.2. The linguistic categories

The present section is a brief outline of the main linguistic categories used in the framework of analysis. A detailed review for each category will be given in the chapters dealing with the data analysis (Chapters 5 to 11).

Given the interpersonal focus of the analysis, the linguistic categories of the framework are related to three main areas:

- A. the presence of the participants in the text or their distance from it and its propositional content;
- B. the relationship between the participants as encoded in the text;
- C. evaluation strategies towards the propositional content.

These three main areas feed into the linguistic devices which constitute the framework of analysis, for each device the area(s) investigated is specified in brackets:

1. Person markers (A, B) (Chapter 5);
2. 'Impersonal' devices (A, B) (Chapter 6);
3. Modality (A, B, C) (Chapter 7);
4. Evaluative strategies and use of politeness devices (A, B, C) (Chapter 8);
5. Metadiscourse (B) (Chapter 9);
6. Voices in the text: aspects of intertextuality (A) (Chapter 10);
7. The main point of the text and the rhetorical structures connected with it (A, B, C) (Chapter 11).

Points 1 and 2 are clearly related to the participant roles and the distance between the writer and the subject matter. Points 3 and 4 are connected to the attitude of the writer towards the subject matter and the addressee. Points 5 and 7 are textual realisations which indicate how the writer tries to influence the reading process and signposts some aspects of the text. Point 6 is related to the extent to which the writer needs to be supported by voices other than the self (academic authorities).

Each area of analysis is investigated using both a bottom-up and a top-down approach: the linguistic features are examined in their own immediate environment and they are related to the wider co-text and context of production.

4.4. The main research questions and hypotheses of the study

This section is an outline of the main research questions which underlie the study and the hypotheses related to them. The more specific hypotheses which are related

to the single linguistic areas listed above will be formulated in the chapters of the data analysis.

Basic Hypothesis:

There are cross-linguistic variations in the same text-types of student writing. Conventions in writing are culturally rooted, not universally accepted or applicable even when the text-type is the same. Awareness should be raised about the fact that different writing conventions should be not stigmatised as faulty thinking or sheer inability to tackle the written task.

1.

What is the relevance of the interpersonal metafunction in student writing? Are there cross-linguistic differences in the interpersonal use of language?

Hypothesis 1:

It is hypothesised that the interpersonal use of language is crucial in the text-type investigated here and the cross-linguistic differences between the English and the Italian data in the use of interpersonal devices may become potential problems for a student using foreign language conventions in her writing.

2. What kind of discourse roles do the students construct for themselves and their audience in relation to the subject matter they are discussing? To what extent is the presence of the writer in the text overt or covert? Are there any cross-linguistic differences in these aspects?

Hypothesis 2:

It is hypothesised that the Italian students tend to efface more the overt presence of their own discourse role in their writing while mainly addressing the more distant academic community ('audience invoked') rather than the examiner ('audience

addressed'). The English students tend to manifest their own discourse role more openly in the text taking a critical standpoint towards the subject matter. The subject matter can be directly evaluated by the English students while the Italian students tend to distance themselves from evaluations.

3. How do the social roles of the discourse participants (student / examiner) impinge upon their discourse roles (writer / reader)? To what extent do the student writers use external authoritative voices in their text to support their argumentation?

Hypothesis 3:

The gatekeeping encounter influences the discourse roles in both communities, but in the Italian community the distance between addresser and addressee is wider and the student writer needs to support her argument using authoritative voices more than the English students.

4. Does the tolerance of interference from non academic register vary cross-linguistically? To what extent do the students need to show competence in academic conventions before they can assume a critical viewpoint towards the subject matter?

Does this vary cross-linguistically?

Hypothesis 4:

It is hypothesised that there is less tolerance of non-academic registers in Italian texts, and that additionally the Italian students need a higher level of competence in academic conventions than the English students before they can express a critical viewpoint on the subject matter.

CHAPTER 5

PERSON MARKERS

5.1. Defining terminology

Person markers are one of the core elements of the interpersonal metafunction and the analysis of their occurrences contributes to defining the discourse roles of the participants in a specific text-type.

'Person markers' is a label used to identify a range of devices related to the presence of 'person' in the text: personal pronouns (subject, object and reflexive), possessives determiners and pronouns, verb-inflections. In Italian, which is a pro-drop language, the person marker is frequently expressed in the verb-inflection rather than the pronoun.

Only first and second person markers will be considered here because they most directly relate to the participants in the communicative event (addresser and addressee) and have a central role within the interpersonal metafunction.

The pronoun system is affected by three grammatical categories in both languages: person, gender and number. The literature about the grammaticalisation of person has highlighted the difference between first and second person on the one hand, and third person on the other (see Benveniste, 1966 and Lyons, 1977 among others). The third person does not refer to a participant-role in the communicative event and it correlates therefore with a party other than the addresser and the addressee. This fundamental semantic divide distinguishes the third person and is at the core of several grammatical realisations both in Italian and in English such as 'impersonal' structures or generalisations ('prop' or 'empty' subject). In Italian the third person singular feminine *lei* is used to address formally the hearer/reader (both male and

female); in this case the marked person (3rd) and the marked gender (feminine) signal distance and deference (Bates & Benigni, 1975; Brown & Gilman, 1960; Renzi, 1993; Renzi *et al.*, 1995).

Some of the first and second person markers in the data are deictic, others are not. Some occurrences are 'impersonal' (see below for a definition) and therefore are neither deictic nor referential (where referential identifies specific individuals and deictic identifies individuals within a communicative situation) (Kitagawa & Lehrer, 1990: 741-742). This is the case of the 'impersonal' use of *you*, for instance. Whereas a referential use of pronouns identifies specific individuals, an 'impersonal' pronoun applies to anyone or/and everyone, it conveys genericity. One of the characteristics of impersonal *you* is that it can be replaced, in many cases, by the indefinite pronoun *one*, otherwise called generic *one* (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 387) because it means 'people in general' or a non-specific category of persons of whom the speaker is a member. In Italian impersonal *tu* can be replaced by the impersonal *si* structure (Renzi, 1988: 98).

It must be specified at this point that the term 'impersonal' is rather imprecise and unsatisfactory because it has been traditionally used in grammar and discourse with different meanings and in a variety of contexts. The term has been retained in the present study because the flexibility of its meaning suits the variety of 'impersonal' forms and structures examined here. The term will be carefully defined each time it is used for a specific purpose in the data analysis, otherwise the label is just applied in a general way to indicate non-specific reference.

This picture is complicated by the fact that not all researchers adopt similar labels to define similar usages of pronoun. Laberge & Sankoff (1979) call 'indefinite' *you* what Kitagawa & Lehrer (1990) call 'impersonal' *you*. Quirk *et al.* (1985) and

Renzi (1988: 98) call this use 'generic'. As mentioned before, in this study I will adopt the term 'impersonal'.

In the discussion of the data, I will also mention a use of person markers which is sometimes assimilated to the impersonal use because the reference is not clearly identifiable: the 'vague' use of pronouns. 'A "vague" use applies to specific individuals, but they are not identified, or identifiable, by the speaker.' (Kitagawa & Lehrer, 1990: 742). An example of vague *we* referring to readers of literature or readers of the mentioned work of literature is the following (see Section 5.4.2.):

E14-31-32 Jane Austen's use of the omniscient narrator gives the reader clues as to who are the characters we must trust [...]

Also in this case, there are different labels given to the same linguistic phenomenon (Renzi (1988), for instance, calls this use 'indeterminato'). The following sections will deal in more detail with these uses of person deixis and examples from the data will be quoted.

As far as the occurrence of person markers in argumentative writing is concerned, the second person rarely occurs in English whereas the first person is more commonly found. Quirk et al. remark that in English '*you* is rather rare in formal writing and the indefinite use is virtually excluded' (1985: 1466-1467); Italian *tu* can be used impersonally (Renzi, 1988: 99), but Italian has a commonly used impersonal structure, the *si* structure (see Section 6.2.2.) which further reduces the contexts in which impersonal *tu* is used (hardly ever in formal language).

First person plural is, instead, a recurrent feature of academic writing and its use can be explained in different ways according to the context and the situation of production (Fowler *et al.*, 1979; Chafe, 1982, 1985; Chafe & Danielewicz, 1987; Biber, 1988; Myers, 1989). Before mentioning some of the most common reasons

for using the first person plural in scholarly writing, it is necessary to point out that this person can be inclusive or exclusive of the addressee: *we* refers to the addresser plus other/s, which implies that the addressee can be included (inclusive *we*) or excluded (exclusive *we*). In academic and student writing it is only occasionally possible to identify clearly either one or the other use of the first person plural.

The following are some of the most recurrent reasons for choosing the first person plural in argumentative writing:

1. reporting the findings of a team of researchers;
2. downtoning the presence of the writing subject for politeness reasons, since the speech act of making claims imposes the opinion of the writer on the reader and may also implicitly contradict previous research: avoiding the first person singular makes the imposition less personal, more distant, in some cases more general (see point 4);
3. presenting an opinion as shared by the writer, but adopted from some other source; this is related to another point: adopting a viewpoint generated within the community (scientific, academic, etc.) and recognising oneself as belonging to it;
4. presenting a situation as a general statement or a commonly held belief; this point is related to and develops from number 3;
5. using first person plural in impersonal contexts in which a more formal solution would be *one* or *everyone*.

These points are related in complex ways and may overlap in different combinations. The use of the first person plural in argumentative writing expresses a gradation of writer's involvement (from the direct involvement of case number 1, to the impersonal number 5) and the possibility that the reader is included or excluded from the referential meaning of the pronoun (points 3 and 4 are most likely to refer to an inclusive *we*; in 5 the addressee can hardly be excluded). The

exact extent of a writer's involvement and a reader's inclusion is difficult to establish: ambiguity of reference may be used and exploited by the participants in the communicative event, but, in other instances, this ambiguity may be unavoidable.

As an aside, it can be argued that it is possible to establish a comparison between the formal use of second person plural in some languages (*vous*, French; *vy*, Russian) and the pluralisation of the first person in some instances of academic writing: in both cases, the direct reference to an individual participant is avoided (cf also the 'royal' *we*). One reason for this strategy may be that the participant is more powerful if s/he belongs to a group of people and therefore there is less risk of losing face; another reason can be that the addresser weakens his/her imposition on the addressee by pluralising the first person reference and, by so doing, associating him/herself with others and distancing the imposition from the addresser's deictic centre (Brown & Gilman, 1960; Brown & Levinson, 1987: 199-202, Mitchell, personal communication).

Although in English academic writing and student writing the use of the first person singular is becoming more and more acceptable and is even promoted by some linguists (Clark, 1992; Ivanic & Simpson, 1992), the first person plural is commonly found. Its use in student writing is influenced by its use in scholarly writing (a model that the students consciously or subconsciously have constantly at hand) and probably in lecture notes. Some of the five categories listed above for scholarly writing may be applicable to student writing as well.

The following sections will investigate the use of person markers in the English and the Italian data: the analysis will start with the second person, then continue with the first singular and plural.

5.2. Second person

The second person rarely occurs in the English data and only once in the Italian data as a conventionalised imperative form (I11-89 *vedi*, see Section 9.5.3.; the only other occurrence of *tu*, in script I6-46, must be excluded because it belongs to a quotation the student reports). The limited use of the second person is to be expected since the scripts belong to a text-type in which there is hardly any overt reference to the addressee. Moreover, as mentioned before, Italian has a frequently used impersonal structure (*si* structure) and therefore impersonal *tu* can be easily avoided. Before looking at the occurrences found in the scripts, I will define some broad categories for the second person and see how they can be related to my own data. From now on, I will refer to the various second person pronouns and adjectives as 'you'.

In the referential, deictic use *you* refers to the interlocutor, the addressee of the communicative event. There are contexts in which *you* can be used generically and this is a possible use of all the personal pronouns (each person, however, retains something of the meaning associated with its core meaning of addresser, addressee and other(s) and therefore, they are not completely interchangeable, Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 354). When *you* does not refer to specific individuals, it can be either impersonal or 'vague' (Kitawaga & Lehrer, 1990). Sometimes these uses are referred to as 'generic' (Quirk *et al.*, 1985), or 'indefinite' (Laberge & Sankoff, 1979). Following Kitawaga & Lehrer (1990), the distinction between impersonal and vague can be applied to the first person plural as well:

- Impersonal you: it conveys the idea of genericity, it can often be replaced by an indefinite pronoun (*one* in English), it resists pronoun shift if reported in indirect speech, it is notionally singular. Quirk *et al.* (1985: 354) specify that this generic use retains something of the second person meaning because usually the addresser

appeals to the addressee's potential experience of life. In some cases, however, the addresser appeals to his/her own experience of life and communicates it in the second person to establish common ground with the addressee. An example from the data:

E13-11: the shallow values of the society you live in ...

An example from Quirk *et al.* (1985: 354):

These days *you* have to be careful with *your* money.

- Vague *you*: it refers to a specific group of individuals which is not clearly identified by the addresser or identifiable by the addressee. It cannot be replaced by *one* and it is notionally and grammatically plural. The following example is taken from Kitagawa & Lehrer (1990) since there are no occurrences in the data; the speaker is a European woman talking to an American about American political and military policy in Europe:

You're - I don't mean *you* personally - *you're* going to destroy us all in a nuclear war. (ibid.: 743)

The referents of the italicised *you* are not specified, but they have to be American.

Both cases are informal because the addressee assumes the status of representative of humanity or a subgroup of it and is directly involved in the situation instead of being distanced from it. In other words, the addresser claims common ground with the addressee expressing his/her viewpoint or a generic viewpoint as if it were the addressee's as well (positive politeness: Section 8.4.2.).

Now I will discuss the instances of *you* present in the English data:

E13-11: the shallow values of the society you live in ...

E13-106-108: ... if designs were not evident they would pass the casual reader by - and to be socially effective it is here you must catch.

E23-47-48: to attempt to disguise your intentions is just as patronising as to lecture to somebody.

In the 3 cases the pronoun can be replaced by an indefinite *one*; the second occurrence is informal and not very clear.

Three other occurrences are quite informal as well:

E16-58 Swift 'cons' you into almost accepting the proposal

E24-79 You have been part taken there ...

E24-79 ... part gone there yourself

The last two occurrences belong to the same stretch of text. What the student expresses in a colloquial way is that the novelist should partly lead the reader towards an interpretation, and partly the reader should arrive at it independently. These occurrences can be considered impersonal (this is confirmed by the singular *yourself*), but at the same time they are a special category of vague *you* in that they refer to readers of that particular type of novel. Kitagawa & Lehrer (1990) argue that impersonal and vague *you* should be kept distinct. Whereas in principle a distinction is necessary, I think that there are cases in which the pronoun can be interpreted as a borderline case when the context singles out a specific set of people and at the same time *you* can be replaced by indefinite *one* and has the properties of impersonal *you*. I will call this sub-category 'restricted impersonal'. In the specific context of the two occurrences, the student writer is generalising her own reading experience to all readers of this type of novel: the second person is here used to distance the addresser's opinion and render it less directly personal. However, the use is not entirely impersonal since the experience can only refer to the specific group of people who are the readers of those specific literary works. There is a comparable situation for a number of first person plural occurrences: there seems to be an intermediate category which shares some characteristics of the impersonal use of the pronoun and some of the vague use; this sub-category can be identified if it is

related to the text-type and the communicative activity. I will deal with this point in more detail when analysing the first person plural (Section 5.4.).

The remaining occurrences of second person do not belong to the grammatical categories listed above, but they are imperatives addressed to the reader of the script:

E5-14-16 (Compare Byron's 'No more we'll go a-roving...' to Marvell's To His Coy Mistress)

E24-63 Remember, it is a personal attitude that we are talking about now [...]

I11-88 [...] vedi Preludio, poesia programmatica che fa parte della raccolta Penombre [...]

see Preludio, a manifesto-like poem which is part of the collection Penombre

In these cases there is no overt 2nd person pronoun, but the imperatives contain a clear deictic reference to the reader, in fact, the examples are the only deictic occurrences of 2nd person and they represent a direct address by the student writer to the reader, not to a specific, individual reader, but more generally, to whoever the addressee/s may be. They are instances which belong to what could be globally called 'textual deixis': person deixis refers to addresser and addressee, temporal deixis to the time of writing and/or reading (*now*), and spatial deixis to parts of the text (*above*, *below*).

The first and the last instances above are expressions which can be commonly found in argumentative prose, as a sort of formulaic imperative. The second occurrence, instead, is all the more interpersonal because it does not belong to fixed formulaic expressions, but it is a direct and informal appeal to the reader which emphasises what follows. It is an informal textual device which leads the reader through his/her reading process and openly claims common ground between writer and reader with the following pronoun (*we are talking about now*). Alternative realisations would

have involved the reader in a less direct way: *It should be remembered; We should remember.*

The limited number of second person forms in the English data has been commented on at length because this type of occurrence is considered a marker of register difference (see Biber, 1988) and degrees of involvement with the addressee (Chafe, 1985).

5.3. First person singular

The first person singular can be considered an indicator of personal involvement of the writer (Chafe, 1982, 1985) and several studies have used its occurrence in the comparison of spoken and written language (an overview in Biber, 1988: 225). The first person singular is mainly deictic, but it can also have an impersonal use, that is the meaning can be generic ('a person, in general'). This use of first person singular is not very frequent, but it occurs, for instance, in texts written by philosophers and linguists; Kitagawa and Lehrer (1990) mention as an example the famous sentence by Descartes 'I think, therefore I am'. There is an occurrence of generic use in the English data as well (see below).

The following table summarises the main figures:

TABLE 1: First person singular: summary

TABLE 1A: ENGLISH DATA

total number of occurrences: 46

frequency per 1000 words: 2.57

range of occurrence per script: minimum: 0 maximum: 10

TABLE 1B: ITALIAN DATA

total number of occurrences: 12 occurrences

frequency per 1000 words: 0.56

range of occurrence per script: minimum: 0 maximum: 3

The figures of Table 1 show that there are far fewer occurrences in the Italian scripts if compared to the English ones. Given the relevance of the first person singular for the interpersonal metafunction of language, the linguistic environments in which the occurrences appear have been analysed and categorised in Tables 2a and 2b (for the English and the Italian data respectively).

TABLE 2: First person singular**TABLE 2A: English data**

	TOT	MENTAL	VERBAL	OTHER	MOD
opinion, value-judgement on topic (47.8%)	22	16	1	5	19
opinion, value-judgement on title (15.2%)	7	7			7
metadiscourse (17.3%)	8	1	6	1	3
statement about oneself (19.5%)	9	4	2	3	4
total	46	28	9	9	33

NB: 8 occurrences are mainly metadiscoursal, but 7 others occur in metadiscoursal environment

TABLE 2B: Italian data

	TOT	MENTAL	VERBAL	OTHER	MOD
opinion, value-judgement on topic (41.6%)	5	2	2	1	5
opinion, value-judgement on title (50%)	6	3		3	6
metadiscourse (8.3%)	1			1	1
statement about oneself					
total	12	5	2	5	12

N.B.: Only one occurrence is mainly metadiscoursal, but 11 out of 12 belong to a metadiscoursal environment.

NOTES:

MENTAL: mental processes (think, believe, feel, etc.)

VERBAL: verbal process (say, explain, reiterate, etc.)

OTHER: processes which are neither mental nor verbal, or not processes at all (possessive adjectives, for instance);

MOD: modality (modal verbs, lexical verbs, adjectives, adverbs), the first person singular appears in a modalised environment; modality co-occurs with one of the previous categories and is not added onto the total figures.

Table 2 gives an overview of the textual environments in which the first person singular is used in scripts. In the left-hand column there are the four types of environment in which the first person singular deixis can be found, it is a limited number of categories and they mainly refer to the communicative activity and the literary topic, as could be expected. At the top of the table there are the processes which relate to the first person singular: mental (*think, believe, feel*, etc.), verbal (*say, explain, reiterate*, etc.) (Halliday, 1994; Dixon, 1991) and other, where 'other' means either processes different from mental and verbal or an environment in which the first person deixis is not related to a process at all (a possessive adjective, for instance). The category 'Mod', modality, indicates the number of processes which are modalised (by a modal verb, modal adjective or adverb or a

modal lexical verb). When modality is present, therefore, it co-occurs with one of the other categories (which is why it has not been counted in the total).

Tables 1 and 2 show that the most obvious discrepancy between the English and the Italian data can be found in the number of occurrences. Among the linguistic strategies analysed in this study, the first person singular is the device which reveals in the most overt way the presence of the addresser in her text. It is the only direct reference to the writer and her own discourse role in a text-type which tends to be impersonal. In this respect, there seems to be rather more tolerance of the overt presence of the writer in the English scripts than in the Italian scripts.

The analysis of the linguistic environment yields some interesting insights related to the discourse role that the overt use of the first person singular contributes to creating. It is necessary to point out that the number of occurrences is not statistically analysable, but it becomes representative when it is related to other linguistic phenomena in the same text-type and it contributes to a cumulative effect in context, as will be shown in the next sections and chapters.

The most common environment for the first person singular in the English data relates to opinion and value-judgements about the topic (47.8%): the student signals that she is going to express her own opinion about the literary topic she is dealing with, for instance:

E2-25-26 I think that in some ways form has become less sophisticated than in the past, although [...]

E3-79-81 [...] but I feel that this merely heightens the audience's reaction to the emotion presented.

Most of the occurrences are modalised (19 out of 22) and the students use a variety of thinking verbs (Dixon, 1991) which express both 'knowledge' or 'reasoning process' (*think*) but also 'impression', 'feelings' (*feel*). It is not possible to establish

clearly which verbs convey impressions and which reasoning, since the use of *think*, *believe*, *understand*, *feel*, etc. can overlap, nevertheless in some occurrences the value-judgement is conveyed in a highly subjective and impressionistic way. The most far-fetched instance is the following opening of script E25 which introduces quite a bold statement about literature:

E25-1-2 As far as my instincts tell me, interpretation will be the death of literature. However, [...]

The imposition on the reader of such a value-judgement and generalisation is hedged by the initial clause (oriented to Grice's manner and quality maxims) which personalises the truth of the following statement, and it is softened by the following concessive. This phenomenon of openly referring to personal impressions about literature can be related to other linguistic devices used by students and will be analysed in detail in Chapter 8.

In the Italian data 11 out of 12 occurrences of first person singular are opinions or value-judgements on the topic (5 out of 12) and on the title (6 out of 12). The following occurrences of first person singular are contained in opinions and value-judgements on the topic:

*I6-80-82 Quali sono queste immagini, queste tematiche?
Direi che, per quanto riguarda la poesia del Praga, troviamo [...]*
What are these images, these themes?
I would say that, as far as Praga's poetry is concerned, we find [...]

I7-67-68 [...] e, se mi è permessa un'altra personale analogia, [...]
[...] and, if I am allowed another personal analogy, [...]

I12-45-48 Credo proprio che la loro ambiguità, come è stata definita dal critico Asor Rosa, [...] sia un esempio della loro debolezza.
I think that precisely their ambiguity, as defined by the critic Asor Rosa, [...] is an example of their weakness.

In these instances the first person singular appears in a modalised environment. It is interesting to notice that in the first example, the verbal *direi*, which refers to the discourse role of the student as the writer of the examination script, is in the first person singular, but in the following clause the student uses the first person plural

troviamo probably because she is examining the poetry of Praga and distances the value-judgement by giving it a more generally accepted validity. In the second occurrence the student decides to explain her viewpoint by using an analogy she thought of, but she heavily modalises this personal choice with a parenthetical clause expressing negative politeness (the strategy used here is based on the assumption that the addressee has the authority to give permission to the writer to use a certain turn of phrase). In the third occurrence the overt use of the first person singular is immediately balanced by the mentioning of one of the most authoritative Italian critics: the student gives her opinion, but hedges it justifying the use of the key word as derived from the critic.

The second category in Table 2, 'opinion and value-judgement about the title quotation' refers to the student's opinion about the wording or the content of the essay title. Since the examination task sets the topic and requires the student to respond to it, in some cases this category and the previous one are very closely connected: I have differentiated them by listing under 'opinion about the title quotation' those occurrences which overtly refer to it or report sections of it in inverted commas. The frequency of this category is 7 occurrences out of 46 (15.2%) for the English data and 6 out of 12 for the Italian data (50%). Within the limited number of Italian occurrences, it seems that the Italian student tends to adopt the first person singular when she refers to her discourse role as candidate who is set the task of discussing the given task: an overt opinion on the examination task seems to be within the domain of her discourse role. All occurrences both in Italian and in English are modalised, as the examples below show.

E23-42 I think in some respects, the quote is wrong [...]

The overt and personalised value-judgement is redressed by two devices, one oriented towards Grice's manner and quality maxims (*I think*), the other towards

Grice's quantity maxim (*in some respects*), these two politeness devices are justified by the type of claim the writer is about to make.

11-139-143 Concludendo, mi pare non si possa parlare di scapigliatura come romanticismo oppure come proto-decadentismo [...]

In conclusion, it seems to me that it is not possible to speak of scapigliatura as romanticism or pre-decadentism

This example is representative of the 6 occurrences in Italian: they all appear at the end of the script when the student has finished her argumentation and can draw her own conclusions on the examination task, they are all modalised (*mi pare* followed by subjunctive, in this instance) and therefore negative politeness is used to reduce the imposition on the reader of a conclusion which has been prepared in the course of the script.

The third category of Table 2 refers to metadiscourse for the first person singular: there are 8 occurrences in English and 1 in Italian which are metadiscoursal. The most interesting aspect, however, does not appear in the table: some opinions and value-judgements (7 occurrences in English and 10 in Italian) also occur in a metadiscoursal environment. Metadiscourse is 'discourse about discourse or communication about communication' (Vande Kopple, 1985: 83) and it relates to that capacity of natural language of referring to or describing itself. Chapter 9 will be devoted to this phenomenon which has the function of signalling overtly some of the writer's textual choices and, possibly, help the reader to process the message:

E4-58-60 [...] I would just like to reiterate the point I made at the beginning when I suggested that [...]

16-111-114 Da questo gusto deriva il binomio amore e morte o meglio, amore e malattia così caro al Tarchetti che ho ripetutamente preso come esempio in quanto uno dei massimi esponenti della Scapigliatura.

From this taste the dichotomy love and death derives, or, rather, love and disease, dichotomy which is much used by Tarchetti, a poet whom I have often taken as an example since he is one of the most important figures of the Scapigliatura.

In example E4 the student points forward to the following stretch of text (*reiterate*) and to the beginning of the script (*the point made at the beginning*). In the Italian

example the student seems to justify her own choice of frequently taking that poet as an example in her script.

The fact that in Italian all occurrences of first person deixis but one are related to a metadiscoursal environment reinforces the claim made above that Italian students express a value-judgement in the first person singular mainly when it is related to the development of the argument, that is to say when they can signal metadiscoursally that it is their task to express an opinion and their discourse role allows them to do so. The English students seem to be less constrained by the metadiscoursal environment to express their opinion and value-judgement and they do so directly tackling the propositional content, by-passing, most of the time, the metadiscoursal environment.

The last category of Table 2, 'Statement about oneself', means expressions in which the student writes about her own situation or experience, for example:

E23-54 I stopped reading them (the student refers to novels which contain overt propaganda)

8 occurrences out of 46 (17.3%) belong to this type in the English data while there are no such occurrences in the Italian data. The category is overtly personal because the student writer makes a point about herself as a person rather than on the content or the structure of the text.

In this last category of statements about oneself, there is a particular occurrence of impersonal use of the first person singular. As already mentioned, all person forms can be used in such a way that the reference is generic while retaining characteristics of that specific person. In the following example, the student seems to include herself among the number of literary authors, but the first person singular could be replaced by indefinite *one*:

E2-3-5 Today we are much freer in our writing. If told to write a poem I might write an 800 page epic or [...] a haiku.

The student is using the first person singular to indicate a representative for her own generation (*today, we*) as opposed to people in the past. Person deixis acquires an overtone of time reference in this context.

Summarising the findings for the first person singular, it is necessary to emphasise that they have to be interpreted in the wider context of the other person markers and other interpersonal features which will be discussed in the following sections. At this stage of the analysis, it is only possible to argue that the overt presence of the student is more frequent in the English than in the Italian data.

In the English data, the students refer to themselves in four different types of contexts. They openly express a personal value-judgement either about the topic or about the quotation (22 and 7 occurrences respectively). The majority of these value-judgements are modalised (19 and 7 respectively), but in several cases the claim the student makes is quite heavy as an imposition on the reader (see examples above). Some of the students, therefore, perceive as part of their own discourse role the open and personal evaluation of the given literary topic and the quotation. As shown in Table 2, in a few cases the student conveys the value-judgement as a 'feeling' rather than as a rational process, emphasising the personal, subjective quality of their opinion, using this procedure as a negative politeness strategy.

In Italian the limited frequency of the first person singular is in itself a noticeable feature: the Italian student tends to limit her overt presence in the text and the cases in which she imposes it on the reader are modalised and tend to occur in a metadiscoursal environment; additionally the majority of these occurrences mainly belong to the conclusion of the script and to the value-judgement on the essay title.

The writer is a presence in the script only when she has constructed her argumentation and she is in a position to give an answer to the essay title.

5.4. First person plural

The basic meaning of the first person plural is '*I* + another / others', where the number of 'others' can vary from one individual to the rest of the whole human race. The addressee can be included in the reference of the pronoun (inclusive *we*) or excluded (exclusive *we*). Like the second person pronoun, the first person plural can belong to 3 main groups:

1. Referential *we* includes the addresser and one person / other people who are specified by the context;
2. Vague *we* includes the addresser and some other people not clearly identifiable;
3. Impersonal *we* is generic, it can refer to anybody or everybody and it is similar to an indefinite/generic pronoun.

We is a flexible pronoun which lends itself to several different interpretations: its ambiguity can be therefore exploited (consciously or not) by the addresser in formulating the message and by the addressee in interpreting it. Another main variable of this pronoun is the inclusion or exclusion of the addressee: as shown below, in student writing it is only occasionally possible to determine if the pronoun is inclusive or exclusive; once again this indeterminacy is one of the advantages of the first person plural. The one certainty given by this pronoun is the inclusion of the addresser in the group of people referred to. In the case of the impersonal, non-deictic use, the addresser claims a common attitude with his/her fellow human beings. As Quirk *et al.* (1985: 354) remark, person deixis, even when used impersonally, retains some of the specific meaning associated with the basic deictic referent.

Table 3A is a summary of the findings in English:

TABLE 3A: First person plural in the English scripts

TOTAL occurrences: 162
RANGE: minimum: 0 maximum: 43
FREQUENCY per 1000 words: 9.08

The final figures are somewhat skewed by the occurrence of first person plural in one of the scripts: E18 outnumbers by far the other scripts with its 43 occurrences. This figure is an exception and reflects an idiosyncratic use of the pronoun by that specific student. If Table 3A is re-written without counting E18, the total percentages change in a noticeable way:

TABLE 3B: First person plural in the English scripts (E18 excluded)

TOTAL occurrences: 119
RANGE of occurrence per script: minimum:0 maximum:16
FREQUENCY per 1000 words: 7.20

Occurrences of *we* 119
Occurrences of *I* 39

TOTAL first persons: 158
FREQUENCY per 1000 words of 157 * occurrences: 9.50
FREQUENCY per 1000 words in Academic Prose (Biber, 1988):
5.7

* one occurrence has been subtracted because it would not have been counted in Biber.

N.B.: only 4 scripts contain no occurrence of *we* (E3, E5, E12, E20).

The second part of Table 3B compares the data with Biber's findings concerning academic prose (Biber, 1988). Biber counts all first person forms together, so singular and plural occurrences have been added together. The frequency of first persons in the data is much higher than in academic prose. This can be justified by the difference in writing ability between students and skilled writers, by the different type of task the students have as compared to that of the scholars and by

the speed at which the scripts have been produced and therefore the lack of time for more formal language.

The Italian scripts have a lower occurrence and a lower frequency of first person plural. For the Italian language I have not found a study investigating the frequency of linguistic features such as exists for English (Biber, 1988), therefore I cannot compare my data with others. Table 4 summarises the findings in the Italian scripts:

TABLE 4: First person plural in the Italian scripts

TOTAL of occurrences: 75
RANGE of occurrence per script: minimum: 0 maximum:20
FREQUENCY per 1000 words: 3.5

As far as the uses and functions of the first person plural are concerned, it is possible to identify a limited number of categories which can include all the occurrences. These categories can be placed along a continuum which ranges from the impersonal *we* to a special type of referential *we*: Table 5 gives an overview of first person plural. The first group of results includes the script E18, the second group excludes it.

TABLE 5: First person plural

TABLE 5A: First person plural in the English scripts

Impersonal	Restricted Impersonal	Vague	Inclusive Authorial Referential?	Exclusive Authorial Referential?	Total
21	38* 6** 4***	33* 43*+	8	9	all English scripts
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
21 (0.11%)	48 (0.26%)	76 (0.42%)	8 (0.04%)	9 (0.05%)	162
					excluding E18

21 (0.12%)	48 (0.29%)	33 (0.19%)	8 (0.04%)	9 (0.05%)	119
* readers of literature ** apparent inclusion of literary writers and readers of literature *+ occurrences of E18, idiosyncratic use of vague <i>we</i> to express one's own feelings about novels, mixture of exclusive authorial and vague <i>we</i> *** people from the rich industrialised world					

TABLE 5B: First person plural in the Italian scripts

Impersonal	Restricted Impersonal	Vague	Inclusive Authorial Referential ?	Exclusive Authorial Referential ?	Total
	29* (0.13%)	8 (0.03%)	28 (0.13%)	10 (0.04%)	75
* readers of literature					

In Table 5 I have borrowed well established labels and I have added some which better refer to the data: the 3 major categories at the top are supplemented by 3 sub-types derived from the main division. As I have already indicated for the second person, there are occurrences which are not entirely impersonal because they do not refer to human beings in general, but, at the same time, they can be replaced by the indefinite *one*. As Kitagawa and Lehrer (1990: 745) remark, there are borderline cases between the two broad categories impersonal and vague, and sometimes it is only possible to speculate what the preferred interpretation in that specific context might be. One cannot but agree with the fact that some occurrences are indeed ambiguous: in some instances either participant (addresser and addressee) might

exploit this ambiguity for communicative purposes, in other instances ambiguity is created inadvertently, and in some other cases the addresser switches unskillfully from one use to the other, as shown below. In spite of this complexity of occurrence, it is possible to find consistent and repeated features in some of the borderline instances. In particular, the text-type and the world knowledge of the reader can help specify some characteristics of these intermediate cases. In the data, for example, I have called 'restricted impersonal' all those occurrences in which *we* can be replaced both by the indefinite *one* and by 'we readers of literature', 'we readers of that specific genre', 'we readers of that specific novel'. In other words, the use is generic (*one*), but only within the domain of a certain group of readers.

5.4.1. Impersonal first person plural

The first example has two impersonal uses: the first pronoun can be replaced by *everybody* and the second by *one's*:

E17-34-35 The reader can only agree that for this character at least, and possibly for all of us, youth is the best period of our lives.

The practical test performed to identify this type of pronoun is trying to replace it with 'everyone' or 'people'.

It is interesting to notice that in the Italian data there are no occurrences of completely impersonal *noi* or corresponding verbal inflection, whereas there are instances of the other categories. One possible explanation for this is the fact that Italian has an impersonal structure (*si* structure) and therefore some cases of impersonal *noi* might not be used.

5.4.2. Vague first person plural

Vague *we* can be found where the lexical environment helps define the scope of the pronoun:

E14-31-32 Jane Austen's use of the omniscient narrator gives the reader clues as to who are the characters we must trust,[...]

The context clarifies the function of the anaphoric pronoun which, as a way of testing the validity of the categorisation, can be replaced with the term found in the lexical environment (*the reader*, in this case). In the English scripts, vague pronouns usually refer to unspecified readers of literature or readers of a genre of that particular literary work under discussion. As is shown in the example, the student presents herself as a reader of literature; it is not possible to be sure if the pronoun is inclusive of the reader of the script as well, even though this is very likely. There is only one other type of vague *we* in the English data which can be interpreted as 'Western world people' as opposed to poor people from developing countries:

E19-3-5 Through the mass media we have been made aware of the poverty and the need of huge numbers of people around the world.

The 4 occurrences in this script are the only examples of vague *we* which do not refer to people involved with literature. In the Italian scripts there are only 3 vague pronouns and they refer to 'Italian people' (inclusive therefore of the addressee):

I5-7 nostra nazione - our nation

I7-29 nostri primi romantici - our first romantics

I7-77 la nostra letteratura - our literature

5.4.3. Restricted impersonal first person plural

Restricted impersonal pronouns can be exemplified by the following occurrence:

E7-12-14 If we see this on a small level in the works of the individual writer it is even more obvious throughout the history of literature.

In this occurrence the pronoun *we* can be replaced by *one*, but it only includes the readers of literature. The instances of restricted impersonal are closer than the vague

occurrences to an impersonal use, but differ from it because the context implies an interpretation less indefinite and generic (different from vague *we* because its meaning is not overtly stated in the text). This example is from the Italian data:

I3-115-116 Asor Rosa ci fa notare che la poesia scapigliata è proprio una poesia per pochi [...]

Asor Rosa [Italian critic] points out to us that the poetry of the scapigliati has a limited public

The scope of the first person plural pronoun is not clear-cut: it might include only the addresser and the addressee, it might refer to the readers of the Italian critic mentioned in the passage or even to the readers of that type of poetry.

In some English scripts the restricted impersonal use alternates with impersonal *we*, this generalises even further the statements and blurs the difference between readers of literature and people in general:

E11-20 But Ulysses, by its very title takes us back to the classics.

E11-63-66 [...] how can we ever be sure if our own free will directs our lives, or if it is part of a grand scheme preordained by God, or if vague power of Fate/Providence rules over us, constraining our very thoughts?

The two examples are taken from the same script, the first is a restricted impersonal in which the pronoun, however generic, is restricted to the readers of literature; the second contains a series of impersonal *we* referring to human beings in general. The students' texts often switch from one type of use to the other, or rather there is merging of types: more or less indefinite, restricted or, in some cases referential and specific. The common denominator for all occurrences is the presence of the student writer who includes herself within these categories and achieves two possible aims: presenting a generic statement or situation as something she shares as well; generalising, i.e. widening the attribution of personal opinions and statements of the student writer. They are apparently two contradictory linguistic moves which in fact achieve the common result of constructing around the student writer a

community, a reading community which can strengthen her own fragile position of a student writing about literature in examination conditions.

Switching of categories and merging of roles do not always seem to be under the full control of the student, even though in general the results sound quite natural and do not stand out. In one case, however, the text becomes quite odd because not only does the student include herself in the number of readers of literature, but also in the number of literary writers:

E2-3-5 Today we are much freer in our writing. If told to write a poem I might write an 800 page epic or [...] a haiku.

The first person plural pronoun should be interpreted as impersonal, but the following context, makes it shift to a restricted impersonal including literary writers (see Section 5.3. for the impersonal use of the first person singular). A few lines later, the first person plural pronoun switches to a restricted impersonal including readers:

E2-7-8 We cannot judge a form by how simple or complex it is; this has no relation to its content.

Later on the student switches back to the previous use:

E2-27-29 I think that in some ways form has become less sophisticated than in the past, although this does not mean we are not creating more sophisticated plots or characters.

5.4.4. Inclusive authorial first person plural

The alternation of uses of the first person plural pronoun in the scripts also include: 'inclusive authorial' and 'exclusive authorial' (see Table 5). These categories belong to the more referential end of the continuum, even though they do not clearly refer to a specific and defined group of people: their use is rather a way to avoid the direct mention of the addresser and both the addresser and the addressee, this is the reason why the term 'referential' in Table 5 is accompanied by a question mark. 'Inclusive authorial' and 'exclusive authorial' are labels that have been adapted from

Quirk *et al.* (1985) as specified below. These two uses of *we* are common in formal and academic prose and a number of them occur in metadiscoursal comments or lexical connectives.

'Inclusive Authorial' is the label used by Quirk *et al.* to indicate a first person plural which 'seeks to involve the reader in a joint enterprise' (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 350). The speech act generally refers to activities or events shared by the writer and the reader:

E16-30-31 To answer this we need to look at authors other than Dickens.

*I6-99-101 Se poi analizziamo quello che è considerato il più bel romanzo decadente, Fosca, troviamo un'altra tematica tipicamente decadente [...]
Then if we analyse what is considered to be the finest decadent novel, Fosca, we can find another theme which is typically decadent [...]*

The expressions containing the pronoun pre-announce that the addresser and the addressee are going to examine jointly some literary authors or texts.

This device establishes common ground between addresser and addressee and is the only clear instance in which the reader is overtly included in the first person pronoun. The use of inclusive authorial *we* can be considered both a positive politeness device (claiming common ground and in-group membership with the reader) and a negative politeness device (avoiding the first person singular and including both addresser and addressee within a wider group of people dealing with literary studies) (Brown & Levinson, 1987). Inclusive authorial *we* is a pronoun which creates a belief in consensus between writer and reader: it serves to invite the reader to consider the same evidence, to follow the same line of argument, and to reach the same conclusions as the writer.

Inclusive authorial *we* is more frequent in Italian than in English probably because it generalises the statement or the speech act including the writer, the reader and other

less clearly identified groups of people. The writer is included because the discursual choice of organising the script is hers, but the statement or opinion is shared among a community which gives authority to it. Additionally, in this way the student acknowledges that the ideas she puts forward are not entirely hers, but are derived from the criticism she has read. The reader seems to be included because s/he is part of that community of readers and critics of literature. It is interesting to notice that in Italian there are some cases of inclusive authorial pronouns which are borderline with restricted impersonal and viceversa. This would confirm the ambiguity between reference (and deictic use) and impersonality of the first person plural pronoun: its use in context is often fuzzy. The following instances have been categorised as inclusive authorial, and restricted impersonal respectively, but each one also verges towards the other category:

I2-91-93 Possiamo avvicinare la poetica scapigliata a quella del Pascoli per l'importanza data al recupero dell'infanzia [...]

We can compare the poetics of the Scapigliatura to Pascoli's poetics because of the importance given to the theme of childhood [...]

I3-115-117 Asor Rosa ci fa notare che la poesia scapigliata è proprio una poesia per pochi [...]

Asor Rosa [an Italian literary critic] points out to us that the poetry of the scapigliati is for a chosen public [...]

5.4.5. Exclusive authorial first person plural

The category which seems to have the most specific reference among the range of occurrences in the scripts is 'exclusive authorial'. 'Exclusive authorial' is similar to what Quirk *et al.* (1985: 350) call 'editorial *we*' and Renzi *et al.* (1995: 353) call 'plurale autoriale'. The label I use highlights its interpersonal function and its relationship with the previous type of pronoun. Exclusive authorial *we* is mainly a device for avoiding the first person singular even when the verb can only refer to something the addresser can do:

E24-33-34 We have concluded that, if a work is not to have designs on its readers, then the readers will have to [...]

111-20-23 Tralasciamo qui il tema del double e passiamo ad analizzare il secondo aspetto, che è quello che ci riguarda più direttamente [...]

We leave here the theme of the double and we pass to the analysis of the second aspect, which is the most important one for us [...]

111-178 [...] spieghiamo brevemente che cosa si intenda per dualismo [...]

let us briefly explain what we mean by dualism

There are occurrences (like example E24-33-34) where the pronoun makes obvious reference to the addresser. Other occurrences, instead, are less clear-cut like in 111-20-23: *tralasciamo* (literally 'we leave') is a performative use of the present indicative which refers to the speech act the student writer has decided to carry out, this interpretation influences the meaning of the following occurrences: *passiamo*, *ci riguarda*. However *tralasciamo* can also be a present subjunctive with an imperative or hortative function meaning 'let us leave' and *passiamo* can mean 'let us pass' (in Italian there is syncretism between the indicative and the subjunctive first person plural). In this case the speech act would involve the reader and influence the interpretation of the following occurrence *ci riguarda*. The three occurrences have been categorised as exclusive authorial because this is the most likely interpretation given the context of the passage, but the occurrences can be considered part of the cline which goes from inclusive authorial *we* to exclusive authorial *we*.

Pluralisation is a conventionalised negative politeness device aimed at effacing the individuality of the addresser and drifting away from the deictic centre represented by the addresser's personality. Renzi *et al.* (1995: 354) consider this category similar to the use of impersonal *si* or the agentless passive in Italian (Section 6.3.3.2). In fact, this is not exactly the case: as far as the ideational content is concerned there might be no difference, but from the interpersonal point of view, exclusive *we* disguises a first person singular deixis, that is, it reveals, much more clearly than the impersonal *si* and the passive the presence of the writer and the type of textual choices she is making. This is particularly true of a language like Italian which has a commonly used impersonal structure.

Table 5 shows that the frequency of exclusive authorial *noi* is more noticeable in Italian than the corresponding *we* in English. The Italian students seem to avoid more than the English the first person singular even when the speech act can only refer to the writer's decision about content and text-structure. In these instances the first person singular, which has a higher frequency in the English data, can be replaced by an exclusive authorial *we*, or, in some instances, by an inclusive authorial *we*. Whereas the first person singular is overtly deictic and highly interpersonal, the reference of the first person plural is less clearly identifiable and the responsibility for the speech act is apparently shared among a group of people, including the writer.

5.4.6. An overview of the first person plural in context

Whereas the categorisation presented above is instrumental to the analysis of my data, different categories might be needed for other text-types. Table 5 simplifies the situation by presenting it as a series of clear-cut cases, in fact the categories are fuzzy-edged: the occurrences have been classified in terms of the most likely interpretation in the specific context in which they occur and some can be considered borderline cases. Additionally, Table 5 has been arranged on a straight cline ranging from impersonal occurrences to instances indirectly referring to the addresser (from occurrences close to generic pronouns to occurrences close to a referential and deictic use). There are, however, common elements among these occurrences which connect and give some unity to their use within the same text-type: restricted impersonal is the borderline category linking impersonal and vague uses; the most common type of vague *we* in the English data refers to readers of literature and it can be related to the inclusive authorial *we* because both the student writer and the reader clearly belong to this group of people. Exclusive authorial *we* can also be related to the group of readers of literature since the addresser, by using

a plural pronoun effaces her own personal role projecting herself as belonging to a community (readers of literature). The students easily switch from one sub-category to another within the same text and exploit (unaware) the flexibility and the ambiguity of the pronoun.

Summarising the occurrences reported in Table 5, the highest frequencies concern restricted impersonal and vague *we* in English (if script E18 is omitted) and restricted impersonal and inclusive authorial in Italian. Since most of these occurrences explicitly or implicitly present the first person plural as the community of the readers of literature, this projects the role of the addresser as member of this community and contributes to the effect that Carter and Nash (1992) define as 'consensus generalisation' (in literary criticism).

In some occurrences the addresser emerges from this group and, while still using the first person plural, identifies some discoursal activities which only the participants in the communicative event can perform: it is the case of inclusive and exclusive authorial *we*. In all categories except inclusive authorial, the Italian texts have a lower frequency of occurrence of first person plural. Italian does not have any occurrences of impersonal *noi* probably because Italian has a commonly used impersonal structure. However, the lower frequency of the other categories in Italian has to be interpreted as a greater attempt on the part of the Italian student to efface her presence from the script even when this presence is shared with the wider community of readers and critics of literature. The relatively higher frequency of inclusive authorial *noi* can be explained by looking at the very low frequency of the first person plural in Italian: the Italian students tend to adopt a deixis which includes the addresser without highlighting her presence in the script, so that the deictic centre broadens to include the addressee and other readers of literature, and

the responsibility for the statement or the opinion is shared more than in the English scripts.

The flexibility of the first person plural allows the student writer a wide scope of use avoiding the more precise and self-centred first person singular and, as far as English is concerned, the formal indefinite pronoun *one*. The first person plural is both a politeness strategy since it presents a statement or opinion not as personal but as shared by a wider community and a device allowing the student to express opinions and statements she has learnt or read about and she agrees with. This seems particularly so in the Italian scripts where the student rarely uses the first person singular.

In the English scripts the student is less wary of writing about personal impressions about the topic she is dealing with in the first person singular. In fact, in some scripts, the student uses even the first person plural to express what are clearly personal impressions. If on the one hand the flexibility of the plural pronoun is an advantage, on the other hand this flexibility can become a problem for some unskilled writers (see E18 with its 43 occurrences of first person plural).

5.5. Some concluding remarks about the use of person markers

The student tends to position herself mainly as a member of a wide, if indeterminate, community of readers of literature. The overt presence of the writer (first person singular) is far more rarely expressed in Italian and tends only to occur at the end of the scripts, after the argumentation has been developed and the writer has grounds to advance her own opinion. In the English texts there are occurrences in which the writer expresses her own impressions and feelings, while there are no such occurrences in the Italian scripts: personal comments of the writer are not to be expressed openly in this kind of task.

The positioning of the addressee is more difficult to specify and it is left purposely indeterminate. The reader is certainly part of the community of readers of literature, apparently sharing consensus with the writer. There are occurrences which include the addressee as a reader of the script (inclusive authorial *we*).

In the Italian scripts some of the strategies which reduce the distance between writer and reader seem to be less acceptable or not acceptable at all as compared to the English texts: they contain only one instance of second person deixis, and no expressions conveying the feelings of the student writers about the propositional content. The Italian students involve the reader by using the inclusive authorial *noi* and tend to share the responsibility for the ideational content and the discursal choices.

In the English scripts there seems to be an unresolved tension in the student writer between the attempt to be impersonal, formal and the necessity to express her own viewpoint.

CHAPTER 6

IMPERSONAL STRUCTURES AND THE PASSIVE

PART 1

6.1. Introduction

The concept of 'impersonality' in language is a multifaceted phenomenon which spans several different linguistic structures. The term 'impersonal' is rather imprecise and, in itself, unsatisfactory because, as mentioned in the previous chapter, it has been used in a range of meanings in grammar and discourse. Here the term is retained because it is rooted in the traditional use and also it is general enough to identify a series of features the next sections will be focused on. However, each time 'impersonal' is used in a more specific and restricted meaning in the course of the data analysis, this will be clearly mentioned and defined.

If 'impersonality' covers a range of linguistic devices, the comparison between impersonalising features in two different languages is a controversial issue. Impersonalisation is a central feature of the interpersonal metafunction and a fundamental aspect of argumentative writing because it relates to the covert presence of the participants in the communicative event or their complete effacement. Impersonalisation can be rendered in a variety of ways in both Italian and English. Some uses of person markers analysed in Chapter 5 will be linked to the impersonal structures examined in the present chapter; in fact, the two chapters are closely connected as will be shown in the next pages.

It is necessary, at this point, to define the general label given to the main topic of this chapter, impersonal structures, and explain the criteria used to choose the devices described in the chapter. The label 'impersonal' has been adopted because its wide-ranging meaning can include different linguistic usages in the two languages. In general terms, various structures in the two languages render clauses,

sentences or stretches of text 'impersonal' eliminating or backgrounding the presence of the participant roles. This can have several motivations: the participants in the communicative event might not be relevant at all to the topic; in other cases their presence might be backgrounded because of the type of information structure (Given and New), politeness strategies, stylistic conventions of the genre the text belongs to, the syntactic structure of the sentence, etc. This chapter will focus on the discoursal aspects related to the phenomenon of impersonalisation only within the scope of the data and, therefore, of the conventions in this particular text-type. In this chapter the words 'impersonalisation' and 'impersonal' will be used in a generic way to indicate the backgrounding or the effacing of the participants in the text.

The present chapter will only focus on some of these impersonal devices: the English indefinite generic pronoun *one*, Italian impersonal and passive *si*, and passive structures in both languages. The choice has privileged the structures which tend to be frequent in expository and argumentative writing (Biber, 1988; Fabb & Durant, 1993; Lavinio & Sobrero, 1991) and the structures which are more overtly used to avoid personal reference. In argumentative prose, both in Italian and in English, the writer can avoid personalising the language by focusing on the ideational content and using processes which background the presence of participants, for instance: *This essay will focus on...* *The novel is not easy to interpret*. The first structure clearly implies the presence of the writer, but effaces it; the second structure is a generalisation which might or might not hide a personal evaluation by the writer. These are two instances of impersonalisation which are not included in the present chapter but will be analysed and discussed in other chapters and different topics (metadiscourse and evaluation strategies in particular).

There are also other ways of impersonalising stretches of text which will not be discussed in detail because they are rather diffuse, difficult to pin-point (especially in a cross-linguistic comparison) and belonging more to the ideational metafunction than to the interpersonal one. Among these linguistic phenomena, there are nominalisations (where the actor of the implied action is deleted) and the focus on abstract entities or third persons (*literature is ...*, *critics say ...*) (see Hodge & Kress, 1993).

The present chapter is divided into two main parts. The first deals with indefinite generic *one* and impersonal and passive *si*. The second part of the chapter discusses and compares the use of the passive in Italian and in English. The two sections interrelate and refer back to some sections of the previous chapter on person markers.

6.2. Impersonal structures

6.2.1. Generic *one*

Generic *one* is an indefinite pronoun which is referential but not deictic, since it refers to someone without clarifying the identity of the referent. The pronoun usually means 'a person in general', including the addresser. In some cases, the impersonal uses of person markers discussed in the previous chapter show similarities with generic *one*, especially impersonal *you*. However, generic *one* is more formal than the personal pronouns and it is generally more frequent in rather formal text-types (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 387, 388, 1467). Quirk *et al.* also remark that an excessive frequency of *one* can make the written passage or (even more so) the spoken utterance sound too pompous (*ibid.*: 1467). This characteristic of generic *one* makes it different from the Italian structure to which it roughly corresponds in meaning: the *si* construction, a linguistic device which is very common in Italian and is used across text-types, spoken and written. The complexities of the

comparison of the *si* construction with linguistic devices which have a similar function in English will be discussed in the sections dealing with the *si* construction (Sections 6.2.2 *et passim*).

As mentioned already, generic *one* differs from personal pronouns both in formality and because the personal pronouns always retain something of their original meaning (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 354). Additionally, *one* is not simply interchangeable with any impersonal use of personal pronouns. In the case of *you*, for instance, vague *you* (Section 5.2.) cannot be replaced by *one*, and not all cases of impersonal *you* correspond to *one* (Kitagawa & Lehrer, 1990: 750, 751).

In the pages that follow, the instances of *one* in the data are analysed and the linguistic environment in which they occur is discussed. The main figures of the occurrences are summarised in Table 1.

TABLE 1: Indefinite pronoun *one* - generic *one*

TOTAL number of occurrences: 49
 RANGE of occurrence: minimum: 0 maximum: 18
 FREQUENCY of occurrence: 2.74

NUMBER OF SCRIPTS with occurrences: 12
 NUMBER OF SCRIPTS without occurrences: 43

The number of occurrences is close to the number of first person singular in English (46 for first person singular) and so is the number of scripts in which the indefinite pronoun appears (13 for first person singular). In the scripts, generic *one* co-occurs with person deixis in different proportions. In E3, for instance, the student tries to impersonalise her writing using 6 generic *ones* (E3-3 *one will find oneself*, 31 *one is presented*, 78 *one considers*, 79 *one notices*, 82 *one could find*), then at the very end of her script she draws her conclusions and expresses her opinion about the topic in the first person singular (86 *I feel*, 90 *I am uncertain*).

Although generic *one* is an impersonalising pronoun *par excellence*, in some specific contexts it can be revealing of the presence of the addresser in a rather overt way. The pronoun *one* always includes the addresser, nevertheless, in script E24, for example, the indefinite pronoun is clearly used to remove the first person singular from the text. E24 is the script with the highest number of occurrences of the indefinite pronoun (18), this impersonalising and formal device is inserted in a context which has a rich variety of interpersonal features: *we* and *you* pronouns, an imperative form (there are only two in the English scripts), exclamations, questions, devices giving emphasis, overt value-judgements, etc. In this linguistic environment, generic *one* loses, in a sense, some of its formality and impersonality and, in several occurrences, it becomes just a politeness device (even though not particularly appropriate) to avoid using the first person singular. Writing about one novel, the student uses the indefinite pronoun, but she is clearly conveying her own impressions:

E24-45-48 ...one's own reaction is strong enough to mirror that of the protagonist and one, as it were, actually finds oneself strangling the ward sister WITH the protagonist.

In Section 5.4. I mentioned a similar case in which the first person plural pronoun was used by the student in a similar way.

Apart from these instances which occur in rather immature writing, in the majority of cases, the indefinite pronoun maintains its core function as an impersonalising feature especially when used as a subject for mental and verbal processes:

E3-72 one considers; E3-73 one notices; E10-51 One could suggest; E12-36 one could argue; E12-42 one can see; E17-83 one cannot empathise; E22-23 one may never realise.

Out of 49 occurrences, 22 are instances in which the indefinite pronoun *one* is the -er role (in Halliday's terms: Actor, Behaver, Sensor, Carrier, Sayer, etc.; Halliday, 1994; Hasan, 1989) of a mental process related to opinions, impressions and

exemplifications of the subject matter, 2 instances introduce verbal processes relating to opinions about the subject matter and 8 are other types of processes (relational, material) which can be related to impressions, opinions, attitudes towards the subject matter. All in all 32 occurrences introduce impersonal and generalised attitudes and opinions. Out of the 16 remaining instances, only 1 is an -er role, all the others are reflexive, possessive pronouns, or subject of passive clauses. Table 2 summarises these findings:

TABLE 2: Generic *one* and its function in the clause

1. -er role related to opinions, impressions, attitudes towards the subject matter:		
SENDER: 22	SAYER: 2	OTHER (ACTOR, CARRIER, ETC.): 8

TOTAL: 32		
2. -er roles not related to opinions about the subject matter: 1		
3. reflexive pronouns, possessive pronouns or subject of passive clauses: 16		
TOTAL OCCURRENCE OF <i>ONE</i> : 49		

The high number of *one* occurring as -er roles in processes related to expressing opinions on the subject matter might be related to a specific characteristic of this indefinite pronoun: it impersonalises the process generalising the -er role, while the writer is still implicitly included in the generic reference of the pronoun. Strictly speaking, the addresser is not eliminated, but backgrounded and included in an unspecified community of people.

The occurrences of -er roles can be divided into 3 categories which merge one into the other: the majority of occurrences have a speech act which can be performed by readers of literature or theatre goers, the second category contains a speech act which seems to imply the student writer as -er role; the third type is the most generic one and the -er role is not identifiable. There is a close connection between

the three types and, in many contexts, the first two are not easily separable. Expressing an opinion using the pronoun *one* allows the student to generalise it and blur the source of the opinion itself.

In conclusion, the indefinite pronoun *one* in the data mainly contributes to impersonalise processes introducing opinions and attitudes towards the subject matter distancing them from the deictic centre of the writer and presenting them as generally valid (both devices belong to negative politeness). There are instances which are strongly influenced by the linguistic environment: they seem to lose their formality and reveal the presence of the writer in the script, the device becomes a cover-up for the first person singular. As for the first person pronoun, the use of generic *one* in the scripts is uneven and not always balanced.

6.2.2. *Si* constructions in Italian

Si constructions are one of the topics most discussed and disagreed about in Italian grammar. *Si* structures are a cluster of three main and related devices: reflexive *si*, impersonal and passive *si*. As explained in the next pages, I will focus on the latter two, whereas I will only mention how reflexive *si* (a simplified label for a diversified phenomenon) relates to the two structures I consider central to the present study.

This section will start with a brief summary of the essential literature about passive and impersonal *si* and the relevance of the two structures to the interpersonal macrofunction of language. The analysis and discussion of the data will lead to the issue of comparability of these structures with other structures in English: generic *one* and the passive. This will introduce the second part of the chapter which focuses on the passive, its use and its relevance for the interpersonal macrofunction.

6.2.2.1. The controversial status of *si* constructions

Italian linguists have long discussed the status and the relationship between the three main *si*'s in the Italian grammar traditionally classified as reflexive, impersonal and passive *si*.

Reflexive *si* includes pseudo-reflexives also called inherently reflexives (verbs for which the reflexive clitic is compulsory and which are not used in a non-reflexive form: *accorgersi*, *arrabbiarsi*, *ammalarsi*, etc.) and true-reflexives (verbs which can be used non-reflexively. In this case, for some verbs the reflexive pronoun is the object of the verb and can be non-clitic: *guardarsi*, *allontanarsi*, etc; for some ergative verbs the pronoun is not an argument of the verb and has only the clitic form: *accumularsi*, *capovolgersi*, etc.) (Renzi, 1988: 48, 101; Lepschy: 1986). In some cases, the meaning of reflexive *si* can be interpreted as reciprocal (Renzi, 1988: 602-603). The reflexive construction has not been analysed in the data because at the discoursal level it offers information which would tie in only peripherally with the interpersonal metafunction.

Reflexive *si* is etymologically and semantically connected to the two syntactic structures which derive from it, impersonal and passive *si* (Rohlf's, 1968: 184-189; Tekavcic, 1972: 499-500). The nature of this relationship between the three constructions has been long studied by generative linguists in order to find out whether a common theory can be comprehensive of the three constructions at the level of the deep structure (among others: Castelfranchi & Parisi, 1976; Napoli, 1976; Lepschy, 1976; Burzio, 1986: 42-53; Manzini, 1986). The generativist point of view is beyond the scope of this study and will not be examined.

6.2.2.2. Impersonal *si* and passive *si*

These two structures are closely related and their distinction is not clear-cut. Whereas impersonal *si* is the subject of the verb, passive *si* is only the signal of passive meaning, which also means that impersonal *si* can be used with all verbs that can have a personal subject, while passive *si* can only be used with verbs that admit a passive structure where the direct object becomes the subject of the verb (Renzi, 1988: 101-103; for a detailed analysis of verbs and structures which allow *si*: *ibid.*: 103-105). In both cases, however, the human participant is implied: impersonal *si* refers to a non-specified group of people (the subject of the verb) and passive *si* has a human agent which is usually implied and rarely expressed (introduced by *da parte di*; no occurrence in the data has the agent expressed). The first example is an impersonal *si* and the second a passive *si* from the data:

I2-37-38 [...] si assisteva allo sviluppo e alla nascita di nuove città [...]
one could see the development and rising < sic > of new towns

I10-105-107 Anche se la Scapigliatura non fu propriamente una scuola con una poetica ben definita, in essa si possono distinguere due filoni fondamentali [...]
Even if Scapigliatura was not exactly a literary movement with a well defined poetics, two main trends can be distinguished in it

The general explanation given above about the difference between impersonal and passive *si* is not accepted by all grammarians. In fact some grammars seem to blur the difference (Fornaciari, 1881: 233-244; Migliorini, 1960: 70, 76; Serianni, 1988: 218, 326-327). Lepschy (1978, 1986), Lepschy & Lepschy (1981) and Lo Cascio (1974) show that in some instances there can be an overlapping between impersonal and passive *si* and both interpretations can be acceptable. Lepschy (1986: 144-146) and Renzi (1988: 101-103) try to clarify the differences between the two structures at the syntactic and semantic level. A relevant difference is that passive *si* has a more restricted use since it can only be found in clauses where the object of the transitive verb becomes the subject of the verb (placed before or after the verb).

Lepschy and Renzi agree on most issues apart from the use of passive *si* with clitics: Lepschy (1986: 145) considers the example *La si compra* (one buys it; where *la* is the clitic direct object for *la penna* 'the pen') as impersonal, since standard Italian has no subject clitic. Renzi (1988: 102-103) seems to consider this a passive *si* and specifies that passive *si* accepts a third person direct object when it is cliticised. This does not seem to be consistent with the fact that the direct object of the verb functions as the subject of the passive *si*, therefore Lepschy's solution seems to be more plausible. Lepschy, however, does not mention the fact that the sentence *La si compra* can be also expressed as *Essa si compra* (it is bought; *essa*: it, the pen), where *essa* is the subject pronoun of the passive *si*. This means that, in some contexts, the *si* structure can be interpreted in two different ways.

In the data several examples can be interpreted as a passive or an impersonal *si*. In some cases the context seems to favour one or the other interpretation, but structurally, both are viable. Here is an instance from the data:

11-4-6 Nell'ambito della letteratura narrativa, si avverte l'esigenza di rappresentare la realtà anche del mondo umile [...]

Within the literary field of fiction, people/authors perceive the necessity to represent also the reality of the lower classes - the necessity to represent the reality of the lower classes is perceived

The translation into English is the closest possible to the Italian version and shows the two interpretations. In fact, the analysis of the data has shown that in the instances where there is an uncertainty about the categorisation of the structures, semantic and discoursal effects of one or the other structure do not seem to differ. In other words, when both interpretations are viable, the human implied agent (for the passive *si*) or the human implied subject (for the impersonal *si*) are the same. In the above example, for instance, the group of people that seems to be implied is Italian novelists of the second half of the 19th century. Identifying the possible

implied subject or agent of the *si* constructions is central to the data analysis and the issue will be discussed at length in the next section.

In the analysis of the data I have adopted the main criteria given by Renzi (1988) and Lepschy (1986) (outlined above) for identifying the two structures. However different at the syntactic level, discursively the two constructions have the similar result of impersonalising the stretch of text and generalising its reference. Both constructions imply a human plural agent or subject (Lo Cascio, 1974: 185), usually a group of people which might include the writer and the reader.

Passive *si*, which can be used only with verbs allowing the passive structure, has a subject which can precede or follow the *si* construction (the position is not always interchangeable and depends on the meaning: Renzi, 1988: 107), whereas the impersonal *si* is the subject of the verb and it can be used with all types of verbs. This means that the effects on transitivity and information structure of the two constructions are different, but at the interpersonal level, they can be analysed as a similar phenomenon.

6.2.2.3. The implied subject or agent of the *si* constructions

Semantically impersonal *si* is plural, as the plural agreement of the past participle of ergative verbs shows: *Si è andati spesso a mangiare fuori, quest'anno* (We have often gone to restaurants this year) (Renzi, 1988: 106). *Si* can only refer to people and therefore it impersonalises the clause without eliminating the human presence from it, but actually implying it. *Si* refers to a group of people which can include or exclude the addresser. In the case in which it includes the addresser (see example I10-I05-I07 above), its meaning is similar to the impersonal and vague uses of the first person plural in Italian (ibid.: 99; Sections 5.4.1., 5.4.2.).

The reference of *si* is particularly relevant for this study. In actual fact, the *si* constructions impersonalise the stretch of text and are not strictly referential. However, the context of the *si* constructions identifies, more or less precisely, a group of people who are related to the process of the verb (as subjects or agents). As far as I am aware, there are no studies which analyse in detail the type of indefinite subject identified by the *si* constructions. The two constructions have been investigated more at the syntactic level than at the discoursal level because of their syntactic complexity and their relation to other structures such as the reflexive *si*.

Renzi (1988) mentions that impersonal *si* is an 'indefinite' subject. 'Indefinite' can be distinguished into 'generic' (non-defined number of possible referents) and 'indeterminate' (specific subjects whose reference is not specified) (ibid: 98). This distinction can be related to the labels 'impersonal' and 'vague', respectively, used by Kitagawa & Lehrer (1990) and adopted in the previous chapter in the analysis of person markers. As mentioned in Chapter 5, however, there is no general agreement about the labels given to these phenomena. In this chapter, the labels 'generic' and 'indeterminate' will be used for two reasons: firstly to avoid confusion with the name of the impersonal *si* construction and secondly to highlight the fact that the impersonal and vague use of the pronouns can be compared to the *si* constructions.

As far as the passive *si* is concerned, Renzi only mentions that the implied agent is always human and plural without further specifications about it. The following section will focus on the analysis of the implied subjects or agents that can be found in the data when *si* constructions are used.

6.2.2.4. The data analysis

The data analysis is mainly based on the attempt to identify, when possible, the implied subject or agent of the *si* constructions and examine the linguistic environment in which the constructions occur. The study will focus on the type of human subject/agent which has been backgrounded and, when it is possible to detect it, whether the participants in the communicative event can be included in the backgrounded group or not.

Most occurrences of the implied subject (for the impersonal *si*) and the implied agent (for the passive *si*)

are generic, only four occurrences are indeterminate; here are two examples:

16-43-46 In un poeta come E. Praga, troviamo poesie che rinnegano completamente la letteratura del primo ottocento: si giunge ad esempio ad aggredire il Manzoni, che ne è l'emblema con una frase come 'tu puoi morire ...' [...]

In a poet like E. Praga, we can find poems which go against the literature of the first half of the 19th century; the Scapigliati even go as far as attacking Manzoni, who represents that literature, with sentences like 'you can die'

120-61-65 Nelle loro opere [...] vengono duramente attaccati i valori religiosi, si utilizzano termini irriverenti nei confronti di uomini della Chiesa [...]

In their works religious values are harshly attacked, irreverent words are used in referring to Church people [...]

The two occurrences refer to an easily identifiable group of people: the Scapigliati, the writers the text is about. In this case, the impersonal *si* corresponds to a third person plural pronoun even though the structure backgrounds the group of people. The context, however, renders these two occurrences much closer to a referential pronoun than to an impersonal one. In the same way the other two occurrences in the data indirectly refer to a specific literary author.

All the other occurrences are generic, but of different kinds and including or excluding a variable number of people. It is possible to identify 5 categories of generic *si* which form a cline of groups ranging from the most to the least generic:

TABLE 3: *si* constructions

Generic *si*: 60 occurrences

1. occurrences where it is not possible to define the people which could be involved (15 occurrences);
2. society in general, people of the historical period in question (5 occurrences);
3. literary writers (5 occurrences);
4. literary critics, readers of literature (10 occurrences);
5. participants in the communicative event (student writer and reader) (25 occurrences).

indeterminate *si*: 4 occurrences.

1. In the generic occurrences it is not possible to clearly delimit the number of people involved: some instances can be restricted to Italian people or to literary writers because the context and the shared knowledge between writer and reader contribute to restricting the field, but the human element is so backgrounded that it cannot be retrieved. Here are some examples in point:

III-55-60 Il 1848 è l'anno delle grandi rivoluzioni, è l'anno in cui per la prima volta, dice Lucacs, si ha lo scontro diretto tra la borghesia e il proletariato. In Italia, invece, si è in ritardo di una quindicina d'anni e sono proprio gli scapigliati i primi a sottolineare questa situazione.

1848 is the year of great revolutions, it is the year in which for the first time, Lucacs reports, we have the direct clash between middle-class and proletarians. In Italy, instead, we are approximately fifteen years late and the first people who highlighted this situation were the Scapigliati.

III-122-125 Da una parte, e questa può essere considerata la pars construens del romanzo, si ha la rappresentazione di temi romantici [...]

On the one side, and this can be considered to be the *pars construens*, one has the representation of romantic themes [...]

In the two contexts the three *si* constructions can include a wide and differentiated group of individuals which cannot be restricted to the categories analysed below. These are the occurrences in which the human element exists, but it is irretrievable because completely backgrounded. This category can be compared to the impersonal

we in English (Section 5.4.1.): the use of completely impersonal *we* (as opposed to restricted impersonal and vague person pronoun) can be only found in the English data (21 occurrences on the whole), not in the Italian data. The Italian *si* construction corresponds to a variety of structures in English; therefore the complex issue of cross-linguistic comparison will be discussed at the end of the section. The majority of occurrences in this category are impersonal rather than passive or, alternatively, cases which can be interpreted as either.

2. Society in general, people belonging to the historical period referred to in the context are the possible human groups implied by some *si* structures:

14-12-14 Inoltre ci si doveva confrontare con gravi problemi sociali, quali il brigantaggio nel Meridione e l'elevata percentuale di analfabetismo.
Moreover people had to face very serious problems such as bandits in the South and a high percentage of illiteracy.

116-14-16 Ormai i letterati si rendono conto di star vivendo in un'epoca in cui si crede in valori ben diversi da quelli proposti dal Romanticismo.
By that time writers realise that they are living in a period in which people believe in values completely different from those of Romanticism.

All 5 occurrences of this category are impersonal *si*.

3. Literary people (writers, poets, etc) are implied in 4 occurrences of passive *si* and one which can be read as either impersonal or passive. In the case of this category, the speech act can only be performed by writers or poets even if their presence is only indirectly implied because of the *si* construction.

11-4-8 Nell'ambito della letteratura narrativa, si avverte l'esigenza di rappresentare la realtà anche del mondo umile [....]. Questa esigenza si era già avvertita nell'età del Romanticismo.
Within literary fiction, writers feel the need to represent also the reality of the lower classes. This need had already been felt during Romanticism.

4. Some instances have a speech act which can be performed by critics of literature; readers of literature seem to be included in some occurrences even though their inclusion or exclusion cannot always be determined. The participants in the

communicative event might or might not be included: they are readers of literature, the examiner is also part of the academic community and therefore s/he is a critic of literature, and additionally the student uses some of the conventions of academic writing as if she belonged to the community (Section 3.4.4.2.).

In most instances, however, it is not possible to determine whether the participants are included or not. This indeterminacy can be an advantage for the student writer, since the authority of literary critics offers validity to the statements and value-judgements she makes without specifying who supports these opinions. In this way, the borderline between the present category and the following category (participants in the communicative event) is sometimes conveniently blurred. The following examples show this ambiguity and how the student writer has, consciously or not, exploited it:

15-52-56 Ecco perché, dal punto di vista strettamente letterario, il termine 'Scapigliatura' non è apparso molto efficace nel definire tale movimento, cosicché si è proposta la formula più adeguata di 'secondo Romanticismo lombardo'.

This is why, from a strictly literary point of view, the term 'Scapigliatura' has not appeared to be very accurate in defining this movement, therefore the more adequate label of 'second lombard Romanticism' has been suggested.

15-58-61 Ma la scapigliatura deve essere considerata anche il primo ambiente di carattere decadente, e questo perché in essa si ritrovano valori tipicamente decadenti [...]

But Scapigliatura has to be considered also the first environment with a decadent character since in it typically decadent values can be found

Whereas the first instance of *si* construction has a verbal process which can only be ascribed to critics, the second occurrence shows a different case. The verb in *si* construction (15-58-61) is performed by the critics who theorised the two points the student writers are making, but the action can also be performed by the participants in the communicative event, blurring the distinction. If the student writer presented a value-judgement without contradicting it, this indirectly implies that she goes along with its contents and, therefore, she could be included in the group of people

performing the actions expressed in *si* construction in the examples above. This brings us to the last category of the list.

5. The *si* constructions where the verb processes point at the participants in the communicative event (student writer and reader) are the most conspicuous category (25 occurrences). The criterion used to distinguish this case from occurrences belonging to the previous category is the following: the verb process in the *si* construction refers to actions or events directly involving both participants or one of them in an unambiguous way. These are two examples from the same context:

117-82-92 Per quello che riguarda il primo versante si possono ricordare le poesie Un frate [...] oppure Absoluzione [...]. Nel secondo versante, quello idillico sentimentale, si possono riscontrare dei motivi sempre presenti e in sintonia tra loro: il recupero dei valori religiosi, dell'infanzia ed infine la decadenza della condizione di beatitudine infantile.

As far as the first aspect is concerned, one can mention the poems A Friar [...] or Absolution [...]. In the second aspect, idyllic and sentimental, one can find themes which are always present and consistent: the re-evaluation of the religious values and the values of childhood, and also the decadence of the blissful condition of the child.

The first instance of *si* construction is determined by the choice of the student writer of mentioning those specific poems, however, the student writer is not giving her own opinion, but following an accepted categorisation made by critics. The second example of *si* construction in the text is influenced by the meaning of the first one and can be interpreted in a very similar way. These two instances are very close to the previous category (see above point 4) and exploit (consciously or not) the same strategy as described in point 4.

In some instances, only the student writer can be considered the human element backgrounded by the *si* constructions, in other words, the verb process of the *si* construction can only refer to an action of the student writer herself. In this case, the construction cannot be considered fully generic any more, since it is a borderline instance used to efface the first person singular from the discourse. These instances

can be compared to the category of exclusive authorial *we* as described in the previous chapter (Section 5.4.5.). Here is an occurrence from the data:

II-85-86 Si possono poi citare le poesie di critica nei confronti della religione e di tutti i suoi riti [...]

One can also quote the poems which are a criticism of religion and its rites

It is clear that the only person who can quote the poems in this context is the student writer, and she does so in the passage that follows. The verb *citare* is metadiscoursal and it is modalised by *possono*, which would confirm that the writer is using politeness strategies to introduce her own discoursal choices.

In other instances both participants seem to be included as originators of the verb process and these occurrences can be compared to instances of Inclusive authorial *we* as described in the previous chapter (Section 5.4.4.):

II-68-71 Si possono prendere in considerazione, a dimostrazione di questa convivenza di vecchio e nuovo, alcune poesie di Emilio Praga [...]

As an exemplification of this co-existence of new and old elements, we can examine some poems by Emilio Praga

In this instance, *si possono prendere in considerazione* metadiscoursally refers to what the student writer and the reader are going to do next in order to understand better an issue mentioned before (but the discoursal choice belongs to the student writer only).

In the case of the impersonal uses of *we*, as examined in the previous chapter, I distinguished between instances inclusive and exclusive of the addressee; as far as *si* constructions are concerned this is not viable, since there are too many cases in which both participants might be included and also cases in which the student writer seems to adopt the opinion of critics and it is therefore difficult to decide whether the addressee (belonging to the academic community and the community of literary critics) is included or not. This is an example in point:

17-22-26 Furono gli scapigliati letterati eclettici e difficilmente riconducibili a schemi precostituiti, per i quali si può certo affermare che furono insieme estrema appendice romantica e appendice decadente.

As far as the scapigliati, eclectic literary figures who cannot be easily described using clear-cut cultural schemata, it is certainly possible to say that they were both the extreme end of Romanticism and part of Decadentism.

In this case the student writer performs the speech act *affermare*, however, she is backed up by the literary critics she read and most probably by the notes she took during lectures. The speech act is strengthened by the modal adverb *certo* which would indicate she has good reasons to be sure of what she is writing since the criticism she read allows her to be so self-assertive.

A last point to be made about this category of *si* constructions is their deontic use (Renzi, 1988: 107; Lo Cascio, 1974: 181-182). In the data there are a few examples of this use (3 clear occurrences and 1 which is more controversial):

15-54-56 *Si pensi soprattutto al valore dato dagli scapigliati a concetti romantici quali: l'amore, l'amicizia, l'arte [...]*

Above all, let us think of the value given by the scapigliati to Romantic concepts such as love, friendship, art

18-28-29 (*si pensi all'America e al Giappone*)
(let us think of America and Japan)

111-161 *si pensi a Il Fu Mattia Pascal*
let us think of Il Fu Mattia Pascal

112-37-38 *Si deve qui ricordare la poesia del Boito Dualismo*
Let us remember here the poem Dualism by Boito

Strictly speaking only the first 3 instances exemplify the deontic use of *si*, since the fourth example is deontic because of the presence of the modal verb *deve*. In the 3 instances the student writer, whose presence is backgrounded by the use of *si* constructions, directly addresses the reader asking him/her to perform an action. *Si pensi* is a commonly used phrase in Italian to attract the attention of the addressee on a specific aspect, issue, example (*pensare* is not the only verb used in this conventionalised meaning, see, for instance: *si prenda*, *si consideri*, etc). In this case there is a direct address of the writer to the reader and the imposition on the addressee is redressed by making it apparently generic, not personal.

As a final remark about an issue which would require a more accurate investigation and an empirical study on a wider corpus of data, it is possible to notice that the structures with *si*, including reflexive verbs, seem to be arranged along a cline of categories which, in some cases, overlap: true-reflexives / pseudo-reflexive / passive *si* / impersonal *si*: indeterminate *si* and generic *si*. These structures go from personal uses (reflexive verbs with a specific subject) to instances in which it is difficult or impossible to identify the person(s) involved in the verb process (impersonal *si*).

6.2.2.5. Discussion of the data analysis

The analysis of *si* constructions in the data has shown that both impersonal and passive *si* background the human element, but only in a limited number of cases are the people who perform the speech act completely irretrievable. Usually, the group of people related to the speech act can be retrieved thanks to the context and shared knowledge between addresser and addressee. Additionally, as it happens for the impersonal use of person markers, the text-type itself delimits the scope of groups of people mentioned or backgrounded in the scripts.

Since the *si* constructions always imply the presence of a group of people, the label 'impersonal' is, strictly speaking, not accurate: the structure does not eliminate the human presence, but blurs the identity of the implied people making it uncertain (in the most generic occurrences), not clear-cut, effaced or not centrally relevant. The *si* constructions focus on the speech act rather than on the people who perform it. This contributes to the factual, 'objective' quality of the writing and it also contributes to the blurring of the actual source of authority: the student, the readers, the critics.

These conclusions would be confirmed by the fact that the highest frequency of *si* constructions occurs when the participants in the communicative event are backgrounded (25 occurrences out of a total of 60 generic *si*). This category is borderline with the category of critics and readers of literature, which allows the student to avoid specifying what is the actual source of value-judgements, criticism, definitions.

The phenomenon can be compared to the impersonal use of *we* in the English data. The fundamental difference, however, is that the person plural pronoun always includes the addresser, whereas this is not the case for the *si* constructions.

The data analysis shows that the Italian scripts have no occurrence in which the personal pronoun *noi* is used completely impersonally, whereas there are 21 occurrences of impersonal *we* in English. This is due to the fact that Italian has *si* constructions that English does not have and would partly account for the higher occurrence of first person pronouns in English. Another reason would be that Italian students tend to background carefully their presence in the text even when their presence is implied, for instance when the verb process of the *si* construction can only be performed by the student writer or by the student writer and her addressee.

6.2.3. Conclusion: impersonal structures

The generic pronoun *one* and *si* constructions cannot be directly compared for a number of reasons:

1. Generic *one* is rather formal whereas the use of the *si* constructions does not influence the formality of the text since the structures are commonly used in spoken and written text-types.
2. Generic *one* can be found in several grammatical positions (subject, object, reflexive pronoun, genitive), whereas *si* constructions have a fixed role in the

sentence (subject position in the case of the impersonal *si* and marker of the passive in the case of the passive *si*).

3. The data show that generic *one* has a narrower scope semantically than the *si* constructions: generic *one* cannot be indeterminate, while *si* constructions can, even if in a limited number of occurrences.

4. The *si* constructions correspond to a number of structures in English which have not been examined here;

Galetto (1991) reports that the most common structures corresponding to Italian impersonal *si* are the pronouns *one*, *you*, *they*; the structures corresponding to passive *si* are *they/people* + *active verb*, *it is* + *adjective* or an agentless passive.

It is possible, however, to draw some conclusions, if not from the direct comparison of the Italian and English structures analysed in this chapter, at least from the type of linguistic environment created by the two phenomena. A quantitative analysis is not viable, but a qualitative analysis can yield some insights.

First of all the English data have highlighted contradictory findings: generic *one* is a rather formal device used in writing, however, the linguistic environment in which several occurrences appear is not very formal and in some scripts the use of generic *one* clearly hides the first person singular, since the stretch of text reports an opinion of the student writer rather than a more general opinion. The majority of occurrences occupy the -er roles of sayers or sensors giving a value-judgement on the topic the script is about.

The Italian *si* constructions are used with a wider semantic scope even though their grammatical function in the sentence is more limited. The range of meaning of *si* constructions ranges from highly generic groups of people which cannot be better specified, to 4 indeterminate occurrences. The *si* constructions can also be

compared to the completely impersonal use of personal pronouns in the English data (21 occurrences of impersonal *we* in the English data, no such occurrences of *noi* in the Italian data).

The common aspect between generic *one* and the *si* constructions is the use of these linguistic devices to efface or rather background the presence of the student writer in the script. In both sets of data it is possible to find verb processes which can only be performed by the student writer, but which have been expressed impersonally for politeness reasons and for the discoursal characteristics of the text-type.

From the discoursal viewpoint, there is one important difference between the Italian and the English impersonal structures which contributes to constructing the identity (or rather the implied identity) of the addresser and the addressee. This difference is related to the implied groups of people that are related to the verb processes conveyed through impersonal structures.

The generic *ones* found in the English data never imply the presence of critics of literature exclusively: there are non-retrievable groups of people, the group of readers of literature and theatre goers and the occurrences which indirectly point towards the student writer. In instances which are not in subject position there is also the implied group of literary authors. The type of occurrences and their environment tends to blur the distinction between a completely generic *one* (which generalises the issue), the readers of literature and the student writer. The value-judgements expressed in this type of context are rather 'personalised' or 'subjective'.

The Italian data, on the other hand, show a slightly different situation. The implied groups of people are: non-retrievable, the society of the time described in the script,

literary writers, critics and readers of literature and the participants in the communicative event. There are no occurrences where critics can be excluded in the second last category and the occurrences of the last category often (but not always) include the addressee. Since the addressee belongs to the academic community, the distinction between the last two categories is not clear-cut. This ambiguity is, consciously or not, exploited by the student who seems to identify with and report opinions and value-judgements of the literary critics. Implicitly, therefore, the Italian student writer seems to need the support of the authority in the field, whereas the English student seems to be less motivated to do so.

The findings summarised here will be complemented by the investigation of another fundamental structure related to the interpersonal metafunction: the passive, which is the topic of the second part of the chapter.

PART 2

6.3. The passive

The sections which follow will briefly introduce the main characteristics of the passive in English and in Italian, and its function in the clause and in discourse. This will lead to the next section in which I will discuss the passive occurrences in the data focusing on the interpersonal aspects related to their use in context.

At the end of the chapter, the use of the passive in Italian and English will be compared and discussed from the discursal viewpoint. It is possible to hypothesise that the passive structure is more frequent in English because it also corresponds to other constructions that Italian uses to impersonalise the clause or the stretch of text (Galletto, 1991). Another hypothesis is that the occurrences of the passive in the data confirm the trend noticed in the first part of the chapter. In particular it is possible to hypothesise that the agentless passive tends to blur the authority which underlies the statements made by the student writers and their discursal choice both in English and in Italian. It is also hypothesised that the Italian students tend to construct a background of external authoritative claims for their statement more than the English students.

6.3.1. The passive in discourse

The passive is a structure which can influence three main functional domains in the clause: clausal topic, impersonalisation and transitivity. The logical object becomes the syntactic subject and in English it is topicalised; in other languages, including Italian, topicalisation does not always occur because word order is more flexible than in English (Stammerjohann, 1986). In Italian the passive, an unaccusative structure, can have the grammatical subject before or after the verb (the post-verbal position is the default one), this means that the passive can be used to topicalise the logical object of the clause, but this is not necessarily the case. In other words, the

flexibility of the Italian word order allows the logical object to be either in topic or in focus position, depending on semantic and contextual variables (Renzi, 1988: 86; Ulleland, 1977: 128; Bazzanella, 1991a: 377-378). Topicalisation, however different in the two languages, is influenced and influences phenomena of text cohesion.

The logical subject/agent (the subject can also have another semantic role, since 'agent' is used here in its traditional syntactic sense) is demoted and can be omitted; when it is expressed, it is displaced into postverbal position and expressed by a prepositional phrase. Transitivity is reduced and the result is a more stative type of clause (see Givón, 1981 for a full discussion of the typological features of the passive). The displacement of the logical subject/agent can also be due to its end-focus position or to the fact that it is new information. As mentioned above, the word 'agent' is here used in the traditional syntactic sense to refer to the prepositional phrase in the passive sentence which corresponds to the subject of the equivalent active. This phrase may or may not be semantically agentive.

The three domains mentioned above directly relate to wide discoursal areas and they interact in natural discourse in such a way that Bazzanella (1990, 1991a, 1991b) speaks of the passive as a 'multifunctional' structure connecting the three domains and other linguistic variables which influence the choice (conscious or not) of the passive structure in a stretch of text: type of text, animate/inanimate entities, definite/indefinite entities, aspect, lexical environment, use of pronouns, etc. In this study, however, I will mainly focus on the effects related to impersonalisation that the 'multifunctional' passive can have, since this field is most directly relevant to the interpersonal metafunction. Agent deletion is considered to be one of the main devices in English and Italian for avoiding reference to persons; this impersonalising

device can find its justification in syntactic, discoursal, pragmatic terms and will be discussed at length in the data analysis.

Because of its grammatical and discoursal characteristics, the passive has been widely used in studies of register comparison in English (Brown and Yule, 1983; Chafe, 1982, 1985; Chafe and Danielewicz, 1987) and considered 'one of the most important surface markers of the decontextualised and detached style that stereotypically characterises writing' (Biber, 1988: 228). In Biber's study on variation between speech and writing, the frequency of passives in English academic prose is second only to that of official documents (academic prose: agentless passives: 17 per 1000 words; agentful: 2; official documents: 18.6 and 2.1 respectively). Biber includes the passive within the dimension marking abstract, technical information and specifies that in scientific prose ('factual, and therefore faceless and agentless', *ibid.*: 194) the occurrence of the passive is higher than in humanity academic prose: 'humanists are taught (and teach) that passives are dispreferred constructions and good writing is active' (*ibid.*: 194). In scientific prose the use of the passive has the advantage of presenting findings and experiments following the pattern topic-event, avoiding the repetition of the agent (often the experimenter/scientist), and rendering the writing more factual by focusing on the relevant aspects of scientific research, that is findings and results (Duskova, 1971).

As far as Italian is concerned, I could not find similar studies of comparison between registers based on the passive. The figures reported in different studies are contradictory. Ulleland (1977) mentions that in the data he analysed (20th century Italian novels) there is a low frequency of passives (0.4% of all finite occurrences of verb forms); he also maintains that scientific and bureaucratic writing probably have a higher frequency, but he does not give any figure.

Van Molle-Marechal (1974) reports that in his data (a mixture of modern fiction, newspaper articles, the Bible and expository prose) 5.36% of the total number of verbs (finite and non-finite) are passive. It is clear that there is no way of comparing these figures because they span different text-types and include or exclude different grammatical realisations (Ulleland only includes finite verbs). Additionally these findings cannot be compared to Biber's because the percentage in Biber are based on the number of words, not the number of verb forms.

Colombo (1990) carries out a computational analysis of 5 text-types: prose fiction, text-books, newspapers and magazines, comics, writing of lower secondary school students. Comparing the frequency of active and passive verbs, he remarks that the highest frequencies of passives occur in text-books (5% of verb forms) and newspapers (3.5%), student writing come next (2.2.%) followed by comics (1.6%) and fiction (1.4%). Colombo does not investigate the question in depth, but his conclusions on the passive are that the more abstract, formal and impersonal the language, the higher the number of passives in the text. There seems to be a correlation, in Italian as well as in English, between the text-type and the passive occurrences.

Bazzanella (1990, 1991a, 1991b) bases her work on a corpus, but the frequencies she gives do not compare the occurrence of active and passive clauses in texts but only the different types of passives among themselves.

Granger (1983), in her corpus-based study on the English passive, argues that the passive is not a structure which mainly occurs in written language, but, rather, written language has more text-types characterised by features which favour the occurrence of the passive. So it is not the medium itself which favours the presence

of the passive, but the characteristics of the text-types. The three variables she uses are: 'personal', 'spontaneous', 'informal'; the more a text has these characteristics (identified by a series of linguistic variables), the lower the frequency of passives. The written language, if compared to the spoken language, has a greater number of text-types where the three variables are less represented and therefore the passive tends to be more frequent in some written text-types. Traditionally, student writing is considered a text-type which should have a low level of the three variables used by Granger in her study. In practical terms, it is an uneven, developmental text-type in which the student writer is not always able to maintain the same level of impersonality and formality.

The use of the passive is also linked to the viewpoint offered to the reader. The demotion of the logical subject or its deletion topicalises the logical object: Siewierska (1984) remarks that the logical object, so topicalised, acquires a close semantic bond with the verb and it determines 'the vantage point in terms of which the speaker/writer wishes the situation to be viewed' and indirectly reveals the speaker/writer's attitude to the event described (*ibid.*: 228). Conte (1988) makes a similar point for the Italian information structure. This would tie in with Duskova's remarks about scientific writing and its recurrence of topic-event instead of agent-action.

In academic prose as well, topicalisation of an inanimate noun phrase and impersonalisation are used to present the argumentation in a more 'objective', 'factual' way, distancing it from the impressionistic effect of arbitrariness given by the addresser's involvement into the writing (Chafe and Danielewicz, 1987). In Brown & Levinson (1987) the passive with agent deletion is listed as one of the negative politeness devices: 'the means *par excellence* in English of avoiding reference to people involved in FTAs' (*ibid.*: 194). Myers (1989) takes this notion a

step further when he applies it to academic prose and identifies as face-threatening acts the claims made by academics in their research articles whose audience is both the academic community at large and particular researchers working in the same field (see Section 8.4.).

It is necessary to point out that the passive is not always used for the discoursal reasons outlined above: there are cases in which the passive is the easiest syntactic option to avoid the repetitions of noun phrases whereas in some other cases the information structure requires it. Often syntactic reasons merge with textual, pragmatic ones and the writer automatically opts for the passive structure (see Bazzanella: 1991a, 1991b).

As a working definition of the passive in English, I will adopt the categorisation made by Quirk *et al.* (1985):

Central passives: they have a clear correspondence with an active verb phrase and their agent can be expressed or omitted. 'This violin *was made* by my father' (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 167).

Semi-passives: their past participle has mixed verbal and adjectival properties; *by*-phrases expressing the agent are rare, but there might appear agent-like phrases (with different prepositions). 'Leonard *was interested* in linguistics' (ibid.: 168).

Pseudo-passives do not have an active transform but only a serial relation with an active phrase, they are also called statal passives. 'The building *is already demolished*' (ibid.: 169).

Out of the three categories, I will restrict my analysis to the first two categories, since the third one is rather more similar to a relational process. The only auxiliary for English found in the data is *to be*. There are no occurrences in the scripts of the passive structure with *to get*, used in informal and colloquial language (Quirk *et al.*, 1985).

The analysis of the Italian data will be based on a similar sub-division. In Italian, the most frequent auxiliary of the passive is *essere* which can be used in all tenses; two other auxiliaries, *venire* and *andare*, are less frequent and they are semantically different from *essere* as the analysis will show. *Venire* can be only used with simple tenses (aspect and passivization are correlated phenomena, as La Fauci (1985) and Bazzanella (1991a, 1991b) point out). In Italian other verbs are often considered as introducing passive constructions (*restare*, *rimanere*, *finire*, etc.), however, the present study will focus on the core passives occurring with *essere*, *venire* and *andare* because the other occurrences are periphrases with passive meaning rather than passive constructions. In some grammars the other verbs are not even mentioned as passive auxiliaries (Lepschy & Lepschy, 1981; Serianni, 1988). Van Molle-Marechal (1974), in his seminal study of the auxiliaries of the Italian passive, remarks that they cannot be considered core passives because the process designed by the verb is stative, not dynamic ('il processo verbale ha esaurito tutte le possibilità di attuazione', (ibid.: 1974).

6.3.2. Degrees of impersonality

The present analysis will mainly focus on the degrees of impersonality which can be expressed through the passive. In the sections which follow, some basic syntactic distinctions will be made and the main findings for the use of the passive will be summarised.

A fundamental distinction is usually drawn between 'agentless' and 'agentful' passives. As specified in the previous section, 'agent' here is used in the traditional syntactic sense and does not necessarily correspond to the semantic category of 'agentivity'. The 'agentless passive' category consists of all those instances in which an agent could be expressed, but has been deleted. The 'agentful passive' category

consists of all the passives which have an agent expressed as a *by*-phrase (English) or *da*-phrase (Italian) (but not all *by*-phrases or *da*-phrases introduce an agent). The passive is considered agentful even when there is a 'semi-agent' with a different syntactic configuration (another prepositional phrase, for instance): 'You won't be bothered with me anymore' (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 169). Another syntactic distinction separates instances occurring in finite clauses and instances occurring in non-finite clauses; no relevant differences have been found between the two categories as far as discourse is concerned. In Italian, in order to compare the occurrences of *essere* and *venire* passives, non-finite occurrences without an auxiliary (past participles) have been omitted from that specific count.

The frequencies of occurrence reported for the data are only indicative of tendencies, not statistically analysable. Nevertheless, the English data will be compared to the figures for academic prose reported in Biber (1988). In Italian there are no computational studies of academic writing or student writing specifically on the passive. Some limited aspects of passive occurrences in Italian will be related to data analysis found in Ulleland (1977), Van Molle-Marechal (1985) and Colombo (1990).

6.3.3. The data

This section is a general summary of the passive occurrences in the scripts. Tables 4 & 5 refer to the English scripts and Table 6 to the Italian scripts.

TABLE 4: The passive in the English scripts: summary of occurrences

TOTAL number of occurrences out of 25 scripts: 296			
RANGE of occurrences per script: minimum: 1 maximum: 22			
	finite	non-finite	total
agentless	203	44	247
agentful:			
-by phrase	29	10	39
semiagent	7	3	10
TOTAL	239	57	296

In order to compare the frequencies of agentless passives and agentful passives with Biber's figures for academic prose, the occurrences have to be counted in a different way: in Biber's computational study, only passives with *by* phrase are considered agentful, passives with semi-agents (usually a preposition different from *by* introduces them) are counted as agentless. In Table 5 the passives in the scripts have been computed in this way.

TABLE 5: The passive in the English scripts: frequency of occurrence based on Biber's categories

	finite	non-finite	total
agentless	210	47	257
agentful	29	10	39
TOTAL	239	57	296
TOTAL FREQUENCY of passive per 1000 words: 16.59			
FREQUENCY of agentless passive per 1000 words: 14.41			
FREQUENCY of agentful passive per 1000 words: 2.18			

Comparing the frequencies of the two main types of passives with Biber's figures for academic prose, the number of agentful passives is slightly higher in the scripts (in Biber, agentful passives are 2.0 per 1000 words), but agentless passives are fewer: in Biber the frequency is 17. However, Biber's sample of academic prose contains texts on both humanities and scientific topics, so the comparison between the figures can only be considered as broad tendencies.

Table 6 reports the occurrences in the Italian scripts.

TABLE 6: The passive in the Italian scripts: summary of occurrences

TOTAL number of occurrences out of 20 scripts: 152			
RANGE of occurrences per script: minimum: 2 maximum: 13			
	finite	non-finite	total
agentless	69	21	90
agentful	36	26	62
TOTAL	105	47	152
TOTAL FREQUENCY of passive per 1000 words: 7.12			
FREQUENCY of passive per 1000 words: 4.21			
FREQUENCY of passive per 1000 words: 2.90			

Comparing this table to the previous ones, it is possible to notice that in Italian the phenomenon of agentful passive with an agent expressed by a prepositional phrase different from *da*-phrase (the default case) does not appear in the data. In fact, the Italian grammars quoted above do not even mention the phenomenon. This does not exclude its possible occurrence, but makes it less relevant than in English.

The comparison of the occurrences in the two languages confirms the hypothesis that the passive form is far less frequent in Italian than in English (16.59 in English, 7.12 in Italian per 1000 words), but the actual difference lies in the occurrence of agentless passive, since the frequency of agentful passive is remarkably similar in the data of the two languages (English: 2.18; Italian: 2.90) and, additionally, it is close to the frequency reported by Biber for English academic prose (2 occurrences per 1000 words).

As far as agentless passive is concerned, the difference in frequency is noticeable: in English 14.41 and in Italian 4.21 per 1000 words. This is due to several factors

which are both syntactic and discorsal and are linked to the three functional domains described in Section 6.3.1.: clausal topic, impersonalisation, detransitivisation. As already mentioned, Italian has a more flexible word order than English and therefore topicalisation can be achieved without using the passive; additionally, and more importantly for the agentless passive, Italian has impersonalisation devices (*si* constructions) which English does not have, in particular the passive *si* is indeed a passive construction, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The use of the agentless passive in English, therefore, balances out the use of other structures in Italian. In this situation, a quantitative study would not be accurate, since a series of linguistic phenomena interrelate and render the quantitative comparison inadequate. In the sections that follow, therefore, a mainly qualitative analysis will be carried out.

6.3.3.1. Agentful passives

Agentful passive seems to be approximately as frequent in the English scripts (2.18 per 1000 words excluding the occurrences with semi-agents, 2.74 including them into the count) as it is in the Italian scripts (2.90 per 1000 words). The main quantitative difference lies in the proportion of agentful passive in relation to the total number of passive occurrences. In the English scripts, the 39 agentful passives with a *by*-phrase constitute 13.1% of the total occurrences, while in Italian the 62 agentful passives are 40.7% of the total passive occurrences. The statistical significance of these percentages is limited because the sample is too small. It is possible, however, to remark that the English percentage is rather low if compared to what the literature reports: in Jespersen (1924) agentful passive varies from 30% to 6% according to the text-type and in Svartvik's corpus (1966) it scores an average of 20%. On the contrary, the Italian percentage of agentful passive is closer to the high percentages of spontaneous speech or in a music radio programme for young people (respectively 35% and 50%) (Bazzanella, 1991a: 374). In written

texts (literature and newspaper articles) Bazzanella reports lower percentages: 30% and 25%. It is not easy to explain the high occurrence of agentful passive in the Italian data: it might be due to the specific text-type and the necessity of text cohesion or to the fact that the students use structures close to those of spoken Italian (see data analysis in this section). Table 7 reports the types of *by*-phrases overtly expressed in agentful passives, either in finite or in non-finite clauses.

TABLE 7: Agents in agentful passives (*by* phrases / *da* phrases)

ENGLISH SCRIPTS						
God	animate human				inanimate	
	lit. writers	readers	lit. critics	characters	literary	other
1	7	3	1	8	4	15
TOTAL						
1	19				19	

ITALIAN SCRIPTS					
animate human				inanimate	
lit. writers	scholars	people	lit. critics	literary	other
31	2	2	?1	1	24
TOTAL					
36				25	

ANIMATE:

LIT.W.: literary writers

SCHOL.: scholar (Freud, Chabod)

PEOP.: people

READ.: readers

LIT.CR.: literary critics

CHAR.: fictional characters (of novels, plays, etc.)

INANIMATE:

LITERARY: novels, poems, plays, etc.

OTHER: inanimate entities not directly linked to literature

All the human agents are related to literature (literary writers, readers of literature, literary critics, characters) as one might expect, apart from one occurrence referring

to people in general in an Italian script. The number of inanimate *by*-phrases (agent and instrument) equals in English the number of the human agents and in Italian it is quite high; this means that in some cases the passive clause is factual rather than personal because no human agent is expressed. The following examples show how an inanimate agent can completely efface the presence of the human element:

E5-46-47 The terrible overturning of values caused by the first world war

I3-1-3 L'esaurirsi del movimento romantico fu segnato non soltanto da cambiamenti di tipo ideologico, ma anche da nuove spinte sul piano sociale e politico.

The progressive end of the Romantic movement was marked not only by ideological changes, but also by new trends on the social and political level.

In other examples, instead, the real human agent is retrievable because of the context or the world knowledge. In the instance that follows, the agent is clearly identifiable with Chaucer whereas the *by*-phrase introduces the instrument:

E4-20-22 ... the courtly idealism of love was cleverly undercut by its parody in The Miller's Tale

This device avoids the repetition of the name of the author, which is clear from the context, and helps focus on the literary work. In other instances, literary authors become topicalised and the inanimate *by*-phrase is in focus position:

E2-9 Historically, authors were governed by literary forms

In some cases the inanimate *by*-phrase backgrounds or removes a human agency, since they are instrumental prepositional phrases; thus the clause is more 'factual' rather than focused on the human element, for example:

E15-81-82 In rag literature [...] people are bombarded by certain messages.

I19-78-80 [Gli Scapigliati] vengono influenzati dalle opere degli stranieri, in particolar modo da quelle di Baudelaire, che circolano in Italia in questo periodo.
[The Scapigliati] are influenced by the literary works of foreign writers, particularly by those of Baudelaire, which were circulating in Italy at that time.

The second example clearly shows the focus on the literary works rather than on their authors.

From what has been remarked so far, there are similarities in the use of the agentful passive in the Italian and in the English scripts. In particular, the agentful passive is used to draw attention to factual rather than human elements and, additionally, it can contain a measure of impersonality, especially if the *by*-phrase is inanimate. This remark relates to the complex notion of agentivity (see Cruse, 1973) a multifaceted phenomenon whose investigation goes beyond the scope of this study. Section 6.3.3.4. will discuss the issue of retrievability of the agent in context both in the agentless passives analysed in the next section and in the agentful passives: it will be shown how retrievability is a matter of degree rather than a choice between overt and covert agent.

There are, however, two main aspects which differentiate the use of agentful passive in the Italian and in the English scripts. One is the phenomenon mentioned above of the semi-passives in English, the other is the frequency of types of agent in Italian.

As Table 4 shows, some instances of the English passive do not have a *by*-phrase in the clause, but another prepositional phrase which can become the subject of the related active clause. In this case the passive can be considered a borderline case between agentless and agentful. This is an instance:

E4-16-18 The Medieval institution of marriage was satirised in Joyce's A Boarding House [...]

There are only 10 occurrences of this type of agentless passive in the English scripts and none in the Italian scripts: the agent is not deleted and the relation between passive subject, process and agent is clear even if presented in a less direct way. In these cases the passive brings about in the clause topicalisation of the logical object and detransitivisation (i.e. a lower level of transitivity in the clause), whereas impersonality is only partly instantiated. All the semi-agents are inanimate but one

(E12-80); the majority of the prepositional phrases also contain the actual human agent who performed the action (Joyce, in the example given above).

The second aspect which differentiates the Italian and the English occurrences of agentful passives is that, whereas the English occurrences cover a broader range of agents, the Italian occurrences are mainly of two types: 31 instances of literary writers (out of 36 total occurrences) and inanimate entities (related to literature: 1; not related: 24) (see Table 7). Analysing the first group of passives, it appears that information structure is the main trigger for the use of the agentful passives:

11-11-14 Tuttavia questo insegnamento non era stato accolto da alcuni successori dello stesso Manzoni, come Cesare Cantù o Niccolò Tommaseo [...]

However this teaching had not been accepted by some of Manzoni's successors, such as Cesare Cantù or Niccolò Tommaseo

12-49-50 Un esempio è fornito da Emilio Praga nella poesia All'amico [...]

An example is given by Emilio Praga in the poem All'amico

The subject of the passive is the given information in context (in the first example this is also shown by the anaphoric *questo* and in the second by the metadiscoursal *un esempio*) and the agent is new information. Contrary to expectations, the flexibility of Italian word order and the fact that the passive subject can be found in post-verbal position do not diminish the topicalisation function of the passive structure. This is particularly the case in contexts and in text-types which foreground inanimate noun phrases both as main viewpoint of the clause (given information, subject) and as end-focus (inanimate agents, instrument); the 'factuality' of the discourse is therefore enhanced by these strategies and the agentful passive is no guarantee of personalisation (see Section 6.3.3.4.).

Summarising the main findings for the agentful passive in the scripts, this structure is used in similar ways in Italian and in English and it has a comparable frequency per number of words. The agentful passive contributes in both languages to the 'factuality' of the text since agents are often inanimate (instruments), or

alternatively, the inanimate subject is topicalised and the human element is given as new information. The relevance of the agentful passive in topicalisation is unexpectedly as clear in English as it is in Italian. Additionally, this use of the passive is highlighted in Italian by the fact that the agentful passive constitutes 40.7% of total passive occurrences in the Italian scripts (whereas agentful passives make up 13.1% of passive occurrences in the English scripts), and also by the fact that the information structure in the Italian occurrences with literary writers as agents has a clear repetitive pattern of inanimate subject as given information and literary writer as new information.

6.3.3.2. Agentless passives

As mentioned in section 6.3.1., the agentless passive is the passive structure in which the agent is not expressed as a *by*-phrase or *da*-phrase. The agentless passive is a far more frequent device in English than in Italian. As Tables 5, 6 and 7 show, agentless passive has a frequency of 14.41 (13.82 excluding semi-agents) in English and 4.21 in Italian per 1000 words. In English agentless passive is one of the most important impersonalisation devices in fairly formal text-types, especially in written language, as shown in the register studies quoted above (Section 6.3.1.). Its presence and use in discourse can contribute to investigating the relationship between the participants and the communicative event. In Italian, however, there is another structure, discussed in the first part of this chapter, which is similar to the agentless passive: the passive *si*, which is typically agentless.

The analysis of the agentless passive occurrences shows that both context and text-type offer clues as to who the agent is, can be or might be. In some cases the attribution of the agent role is unmistakable, and so these instances can be said to be borderline with agentful passives. In other cases there are strong hypotheses the reader can make about the identity of the agent. In yet other instances the agent

cannot be retrieved and these are the truly impersonal occurrences. In this last case an acceptable active form equivalent would have *someone* or *people* as its subject.

The lack of agent may offer insights into a number of issues: what the student writer considers shared knowledge between herself and her reader and can be omitted, what sections of discourse she wants to present as generalisations or impersonal statements, what the conventions of academic writing she follows are.

In the data analysis, the practical criterion used to identify different sub-categories of agentless passives has been reversing the clause into active to see who the possible subject is. Three main categories of agentless passive have been identified in the scripts:

1. The agent is clearly retrievable from the context or from world knowledge (shared knowledge between participants).
2. Restricted impersonal agent: the agent's identity is not clear-cut, but it can be restricted to a limited group of people.
3. Impersonal, generic: the agent is not retrievable.

Each category will be defined and followed by a discussion of its use in context.

1. A great number of occurrences have retrievable agents because they can be easily deduced from the context or from world knowledge (see Table 8, Section 6.3.3.4.). The two cases have been conflated because it is not always possible to tell them apart and because they both relate to shared knowledge between writer and reader. In other words, some agents are not made explicit because they would be redundant or irrelevant: either they are clear from the context (and therefore shared by the discourse participants), from world knowledge or knowledge of that specific context (shared knowledge again).

There are also some passive verb forms which implicitly point at a specific group of possible agents in a context in which literature is discussed: to write and to read, for instance, imply agents which necessarily belong to the groups of writers and readers (in the context, literary writers, literary critics and readers of literature). Some contexts may also point at a specific agent, in other instances explicit reference is made to a group of agents:

I10-94-97 [...] il grande Romanticismo tedesco aveva aperto le porte all'onirico, al magico e all'istintualità, tutti temi che verranno ripresi nelle opere degli Scapigliati.

The great German Romanticism had opened the doors to what was oneiric, magic and to instinctuality, all themes that were to be taken up in the works of the Scapigliati.

E3-29-30 In both Marlowe's and Sophocles' plays one is presented with an interpretation of the action.

These passives (as example E4-16-18 in Section 6.3.3.1.) are accompanied by locative prepositional phrases (*in* as preposition) referring to literary works. The actual implicit agent, the literary writer, is specified as a genitive noun phrase within these locative phrases. In the English example E3-29-30, while the retrievable agent is positioned as given information, impersonalisation affects the passive subject which is expressed as an indefinite *one*.

In other contexts the reference to the agent is not in the same clause or sentence, but is nevertheless overt because of the overall context:

I6-94-96 Il motivo della perdita d'identità è affrontato in modo più approfondito nel racconto 'fantasticizzato' Storia di una gamba.

The theme of the loss of identity is taken up in a deeper way in the 'fantasy' story *Storia di una gamba*

E3-80-81 [...] I feel that this merely heightened the audience's reaction to the emotion presented.

In the Italian example the implicit agent is Tarchetti: the context makes this clear and repeating the writer's name would be redundant. In the English example the agent (Marlowe) is obvious from the context, since the student has been talking at length about his plays.

The agent may also consist of a group of people rather than one person. This use can be compared to the vague use of first person pronoun *we* which refers to specific individuals, not overtly identified in the context (see above Section 5.4.2.):

E5-32-33 Multiple narration was experimented with in the Victorian age, e.g. [...]

Examples of writers and novels follow: Victorian novelists are the agent of the clause and they can be retrieved using the context and shared knowledge, even though the agent is never overtly identified. In a similar way, the following passive structure implies as agent a group of readers which can be indirectly related to what the previous paragraph describes as *lettori borghesi* (middle-class readers):

I4-48-50 Inoltre, si era notevolmente sviluppata l'industria editoriale, che puntava al guadagno e quindi non pubblicava opere che non sarebbero state lette.

Moreover, there had been a significant development of the publishing industry, which aimed at earning money and therefore it did not publish works which would not be read.

One instance has 'critics' as agent retrievable from the nominalisation *critical acclaim*. It is the only example in English in which the implied agent does not include readers, but refers to critics only:

E12-45-46 Peter Ackroyd's book Hawksmoore < sic > was treated to considerable critical acclaim [...]

In all the occurrences of this first type of agentless passive, the agent is clearly retrievable, in some cases redundant because obvious from the context, in other cases irrelevant because the focus is on the literary work itself. The agent is therefore not deleted because it is unclear or in order to obfuscate its identity, but rather to foreground the literary work or the inanimate element. The data analysis showed that there are no noticeable qualitative differences between the English and the Italian data, whereas, as Table 8 will show (Section 6.3.3.4.), the frequency of each type of agentless passive is higher in English than in Italian.

2. The second category of agents is less clearly retrievable and identifiable: it tends towards impersonality and shares similarities both with the category discussed above and with the third irretrievable, impersonal type of agent to be discussed below. I called this type of agent 'restricted impersonal' relating it to the corresponding use of the first person plural *we* (Section 5.4.3.). This label includes all passive occurrences whose agents are not specifically identified in the context, but can only refer to a limited group of people, not to people in general (generic use) or to a completely irretrievable agent (indeterminate).

A quantitative phenomenon which will be discussed later, but has to be cursorily mentioned here, is that the less specific the agent is, the fewer occurrences can be found in the Italian data, and the more occurrences can be found in the English data, confirming the primacy of the impersonalising function of the agentless passive in English. For instance, the occurrences of restricted impersonal agentless passive number 22 in Italian in contrast with 90 in English, as shown in Table 8 (Section 6.3.3.4.).

The text-type, the subject matter and the context help delimit the group of people the agent phrase refers to. In the present text-type the sub-categories in English are: literary authors (33 occurrences), readers of literature (46), other groups (society, the authority, etc.; 11 occurrences). Among readers there are also theatre and cinema audiences and, in a limited number of occurrences (7 out of 46), the context and the type of verb (*value*, *scrutinise*, *study*, *analyse*, *class*) seem to imply that critics are included in the number of readers:

E10-12-13 [literature] was studied and scrutinised for its moral worth and argument.

In all occurrences which can refer to the critics, the public, the common readers are also included.

Additionally out of 46 occurrences of restricted impersonal which can refer to readers or critics, only 11 exclude addresser and addressee of the scripts from being included as readers (or critics). In general these 11 instances are related to specific time spans or situations which necessarily exclude the discourse participants. One instance is the example quoted above, another the following one:

E3-58-59 The legend of the Sphinx was one known and possibly credited in ancient Greece [...]

There are instances which focus on the reactions of the common reader:

E14-80-81 [the novel] can also be read as a detective story

E21-6-8 Therefore, if literature were to lecture us and clarify for us the problems of society, it would not be read for pleasure [...]

As far as the Italian scripts are concerned, the occurrences of restricted impersonal agentless passive are far fewer (22) and can be divided into the following sub-categories: literary writers (3); occurrences which can refer to both readers and critics (9); occurrences which can only refer to critics (10); 1 occurrence which indirectly refers to Italian people. The inclusion of the addresser and the addressee in the number of readers and critics is only possible in a few cases, since the student writer often refers back to literary events which happened in the past:

I14-62-64 In tale contesto gli Scapigliati si trovano isolati: le loro opere non venivano apprezzate perché non più corrispondenti alle esigenze della nuova realtà borghese.

In this context the scapigliati found themselves isolated: their works were not appreciated because they did not correspond any longer to the needs of the new middle-class reality.

Three occurrences (I18-103-105; I20-99-101; I17-102-106) can include readers, critics and the participants in the communicative event:

I18-103-105 Facendo ora riferimento agli Scapigliati, Emilio Praga può essere considerato uno dei maggiori esponenti di tale movimento.

As regards the Scapigliati, Emilio Praga can be considered one of the main representatives of this movement.

I have quoted at length because the context shows that, when the participants are not excluded, the student writer modalises the value-judgement to redress the imposition on the reader (*può essere considerato*). A similar usage of modality in the English scripts will be commented on below.

The third example including readers, critics and the participants in the communicative event shows a different use of modality:

I17-102-106 Questo romanzo ha un carattere frammentario ed è articolato per scene, ma questa sua struttura sconnessa non va considerata in chiave negativa, ma come anticipazione del romanzo di fine secolo.

This novel is fragmented and it is organised into scenes, but this unconnected structure should not be considered negatively, but as an anticipation of the novel of the end of the century.

Non va considerata expresses deontic modality, very rarely used in the scripts, and the only occurrence in the data of the passive auxiliary *andare*. *Andare* is often used deontically in passive occurrences (Van Molle-Marechal, 1974: 369; Renzi, 1988: 92): '*questo problema va risolto subito* "this problem must be solved at once"' (Vincent, 1988: 302). In this case, the student writer can convey the point forcefully because she is probably supported in her claim (expressed impersonally) by the criticism she read.

In English several occurrences of this restricted impersonal use are modalised: a value-judgement is tentatively expressed in an impersonalised way and the vague reference to the agent could include the student writer as well:

E14-9-11 Literature that does not have evident designs on its readers may for example be seen in the novels of Jane Austen.

E14-38-41 Works such as these perhaps do not have evident designs on the reader in, for example, a political way, but a moral undertone could be seen as a guide to the reader.

In both examples the student refers to the main topic of the script and the quotation given in the examination task: the value-judgement, therefore, is one which includes her as reader of literature. The opinion is expressed using negative politeness devices: epistemic modality (*may, could*), hedging (*perhaps*) and, in this case, passive structures which impersonalise and render more generally accepted the opinion put forward by the student. In Brown and Levinson (1987) these negative politeness strategies are defined as: 'be conventionally indirect', 'hedge', 'impersonalise', 'state the FTA as a general rule' (see Chapter 8).

Whereas some instances of restricted impersonal (see E10-12-13) generalise the statement, other instances (E14-9-11, E14-38-41) are conventionally used to avoid reference to the addresser impersonalising the statement. The difference between these two cases is not clear cut; in the latter case, however, the student writer tends to modalise the value-judgement more since the imposition of the claim on the addressee is weightier.

3. The impersonal passive is the last category. Its agent is generally irretrievable and apparently irrelevant to understand the ideational content of the clause. The passive can be either generic (the agent tends to be a universal pronoun) or simply indeterminate (the referent is unspecified). It is not always easy or possible to separate these two instances and therefore I consider them as a single category. Reversing the passive into active, the subject would be 'people', 'anyone'.

The main difference between the English and the Italian data is the number of occurrences and their use in the clause since there are only 15 in Italian and 91 in the English scripts. This passive is mainly used in two types of contexts: either the agent is unknown or too generic to be specified, or the expression is a value-judgement or a metadiscoursal expression that the student writer wants to express

impersonally. The second instance becomes a negative politeness strategy which redresses the imposition of the value-judgement on the reader; this is also shown by the use of modality and hedging used in context. In the Italian scripts this use of the passive is almost irrelevant since there are only two instances of it, whereas in the English scripts there are 38 occurrences. It is possible to argue that the impersonal use of agentless passive is infrequent in Italian because the *si* construction is often preferred in this function. A discussion of instances from the data will exemplify the point.

Here are examples of impersonal agentless passives in which the agent is not clearly identifiable or is generic (no specific reference to a particular group of people; Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 265).

E7-64-66 People have realised that [language] is the tool of literature and must therefore be refined and adapted in order to encourage innovation.

I8-45-48 [...] gli intellettuali non si sentivano più parte necessaria della società ma emarginati, privati del loro ruolo attivo all'interno della comunità.
 [...] intellectuals did not feel an integral part of society, but marginalised, deprived of their active role within the community.

The agents are generic and their interpretation is influenced by the presence of *people* at the beginning of the sentence in the English example and by the word *comunità* in the Italian example, neither words, however, can help identify the agent, just place it within a social context.

The second type of occurrence has the function of impersonalising a value-judgement or a metadiscoursal remark. Both value-judgements and metadiscoursal expressions will be discussed at length in Chapters 8 and 9; here I only give a concise definition of what is meant by these labels. Value-judgements are opinions about the topic the student is writing about; metadiscoursal expressions are expressions referring to the discourse of the text itself. There is a personal component in the choice of the value-judgement or the metadiscoursal expression

which is eliminated or completely backgrounded by using an impersonal passive. Whereas in the completely generic agentless passive examined before, the personal component of the addresser is minimal (she can be included as a member of society or humanity), in the instances of value-judgements and metadiscoursal expressions, her discourse role and presence in the script is far more central even when effaced. In fact there is an imposition on the reader of the student's discursial and ideational choices. In this context, the use of impersonal agentless passive indicates her attempt at effacing her presence in the discourse, either implying the presence of an external authoritative source or foregrounding the apparent factuality and 'objectivity' of what she is writing. Both devices belong to the conventions of this text-type.

In the Italian scripts where there are only two instances of this passive:

15-58-59 Ma la Scapigliatura deve essere considerata anche il primo ambiente di carattere decadente [...]

But Scapigliatura has also to be considered as the first literary environment of Decadentism

110-148-150 Quindi la Scapigliatura deve venir intesa non come una corrente a se stante bensì l'anello di congiunzione tra la cultura romantica e quella decadente [...]

Therefore Scapigliatura must be interpreted not as an independent trend, but as the link between the romantic and the decadent cultures [...]

Both instances refer to the main issue raised by the examination task, both are modalised as opinions that have to be necessarily drawn, both opinions are expressed as generally accepted viewpoints. In these two cases the passive could be replaced by a passive *si* without any perceptible change in the overall meaning of the stretches of text, which would confirm the relation between the two structures.

In English this linguistic strategy is commonly adopted:

E1-23-34 What is often meant by 'sophisticated' is often, I believe, realistic.

The metadiscoursal comment contains a definition of terminology, the student shows her tentativeness with a cluster of negative politeness devices: impersonal passive, generalisation (*often*) and hedges (*often, I believe*; for personalisation of negative politeness, see Section 8.4.3.).

E3-42-44 Other arguments may be drawn from these three plays, however, which can be used to refute the statement in the question.

The metadiscoursal comment (referring to the three plays chosen as examples by the student writer) is here accompanied by a clear value-judgement about the quotation of the examination task. The student redresses the face-threatening act of refuting the statement by impersonalising the utterance, and modalising the passives. In this case the actual agent is the student writer herself, since she has chosen the examples and she is refuting the statement as part of the communicative event she is engaged in. This type of impersonal passive is generally modalised and some occurrences are conventionalised phrases of academic writing:

E8-44 [...] it can be argued [...]

E13-23 It may be argued that [...]

E14-83 It can be said [...]

These instances can be related to the use of authorial exclusive *we*, mentioned in Section 5.4.5., in which the conventionalised first person plural replaces the use of the first person singular. One instance clearly shows that the student is using an impersonal passive to avoid a more personal reference: the authorial *we* generalises the statement, but includes the student writer:

E22-11 This can be illustrated if we refer to some modern twentieth century drama [...]

Before summarising the findings and interpreting the data, one more point has to be made about the occurrences of the three different auxiliaries in the Italian passive.

6.3.3.3. Italian passive auxiliaries

The Italian passive can be expressed using three different auxiliaries: *essere*, *venire* and *andare*. The most frequent and default auxiliary is *essere*. *Venire* can be only used with simple tenses, not with perfect ones. *Andare* is the least frequent and usually occurs with simple tenses and third persons. Both *venire* and *andare* slightly differ semantically from *essere* (Van Molle-Marechal, 1974). In order to compare the frequencies of occurrence of these three auxiliaries, the non-finite occurrences without auxiliary expressed (past participles) have not been counted.

Andare is the least frequent and is used to express either deontic necessity or progression of the action with verbs with an unpleasant meaning (*va smarrito*, it is being lost; *va distrutto*, it is being destroyed) (Van Molle-Marechal, 1974: 369). The only occurrence in the scripts (out of 108 passives with auxiliaries expressed) has been discussed above (Section 6.3.3.2.; example I17-102-106) and it is a deontic occurrence. Probably the very low occurrence of *andare* is related to the fact that deontic modality is rarely to be found in argumentative texts (see Section 7.5).

Venire is quite common but has a more limited range of use than *essere*: it can be used only to express simple tenses and is restricted to dynamic verbs, this means that not all occurrences of *essere* in the scripts could be replaced by *venire*. In van Molle-Marechal's study (based on a corpus formed by different text-types and therefore non-homogeneous) *venire* has a frequency of 16.38% of passives against 80.44% of occurrences with *essere*. Remarkably, in the scripts the two auxiliaries occur with a similar frequency: 50% of occurrences have *essere*, 49% of occurrences have *venire*, even if *venire* can form a more restricted number of tenses. Bazzanella (1991a, 1991b) reports that in some text-types the occurrences with *venire* can be rather high and mentions the 40% of *venire* passives in

newspaper articles. She also remarks that there is an expansion in the use of *venire* passive in contemporary Italian especially in the present and imperfect tenses (Bazzanella, 1991b: 202).

The reason for the high percentage of the passive with *venire* in the scripts can be related to the semantics of the auxiliary in context. As Van Molle-Marechal (1974: 370-372) and Renzi (1988: 91-92) remark, *venire* expresses more clearly than *essere* the duration of the passive process, in other words *venire* passives cannot be interpreted as stative, but only as dynamic:

La porta è chiusa / La porta viene chiusa / The door is closed

The utterance with *essere* is ambiguous as the English form is, but the instance with *venire* is unmistakably a process being performed (*the door is being closed*). However, this is not the only characteristic of *venire*: Van Molle-Marechal's analysis offers some additional information as to the use of *venire*. I will only focus here on what is relevant to the scripts. *Venire* seems to occur more frequently in the following cases: when the register is more formal, the ideational content is expressed as generically acceptable and valid, the authority is apparently external to the addresser's control. It can be said that the last two aspects contribute to the first one and are related to writing conventions of argumentative and academic prose. In particular, generalisation is one of the negative politeness strategies used to redress the imposition on the addressee. Indirectly expressing a content as if this is backed up by an external authority can imply either an impersonalisation which is a negative politeness strategy or going off record with the face-threatening act of imposing one's opinion (Brown and Levinson, 1987; Myers, 1989). The first instance shows generalization and also an overtone of inevitability:

114-62-64 In tale contesto gli scapigliati si trovarono isolati: le loro opere non venivano apprezzate perché non più corrispondenti alle esigenze della nuova realtà borghese.

In this context the scapigliati were isolated: their works were not appreciated anymore because they did not correspond to the needs of the new middle-class reality.

The generalisation and impersonalisation are even clearer in the occurrences where *venire* is used with a generic agentless passive:

110-41-44 [...] nel periodo antecedente l'unificazione [il letterato] è molto attivo, la sua attività viene vista come una missione sociale e si identifica nella figura del poeta-vate; invece nel periodo post-unità perde il suo ruolo dominante e viene considerato come qualcosa di superfluo.

[...] in the period before the unification of Italy, [the literary writer] is very active, and his/her activity is seen as a social mission and s/he identifies in the figure of 'poeta-vate'; instead in the period after the unification s/he loses his/her dominant role and is considered as a superfluous presence.

The following instances imply an external authority and, in fact, these are examples of restricted impersonal agentless passives which imply the authority of critics of literature (8 out of the 9 occurrences of this category have the auxiliary *venire*):

11-6-7 [...] proprio a questo indirizzo verrà dato il nome di 'Verismo'.
[...] precisely to this trend will be given the name of 'Verismo'.

14-74-75 [...] tendenza che in letteratura veniva definita come doppio.
[...] tendency which in literature was defined as 'double'.

Even though there are occurrences of *venire* which do not fall within the cases examined above and there is no specific reason to be found for its selection, the high percentage of *venire* is due to the fact that the text-type and the conventions of the register are favourable to the occurrence of *venire*. This seems to be confirmed, moreover, by the relative occurrence of *venire* in the subcategories of the passive examined above: *venire* is rather common with agentless passives which belong to the subcategories of restricted impersonal and generic (35% of agentful passives with auxiliary and 54% of agentless passives with auxiliary occur with *venire*).

In conclusion it may be said that the occurrences of *venire* passive in the scripts contribute to the formality of the discourse and are due to it.

6.3.3.4. Retrievalability of the agent in context

Table 8 summarises the findings for the passive: the categories have been placed on a cline which has the complete retrievalability of the agent at one end and the complete impersonality at the other. The boundaries of the categories are only conventionally drawn since there are borderline cases linking them.

TABLE 8A: Agent retrievalability in English.

Total number of passives: 296	

RETRIEVABLE	

^	
^1. The agent is expressed as a <i>by</i> -phrase: 39 occurrences.	
^2. The agent is expressed as a prepositional phrase different from a <i>by</i> -phrase: 10 occurrences.	
^3. The agent is unexpressed but is retrievalable from the context or from world knowledge: 67 out of which 56 are writers, 5 readers, 1 critics, 3 characters of novels and 2 others.	
^4. Restricted impersonal: 90; subgroups: literary authors: 33; readers and critics: 46; other (society, the authorities, cinema producers, etc): 11.	
^5. Impersonal / Generic: 90.	
^	

IRRETRIEVABLE	

TABLE 8B: Agent retrievability in Italian.

Total number of passives: 152	

RETRIEVABLE	

^	
^1. The agent is expressed as a da-phrase: 62	
^2. The agent is retrievable from the context or world knowledge: 54	
(49 writers, 1 readers, 1 readers and critics, 2 others)	
^3. Restricted impersonal: 22	
(3 writers, 9 readers and critics, 10 critics, 1 others)	
^4. Impersonal / generic: 15	
^	

IRRETRIEVABLE	

Table 8 shows that not all occurrences of agentless passives are impersonalising devices because in some instances the agent is clear from the context. In the majority of cases, however, the reference of the agent is either difficult or impossible to retrieve.

Table 8, however, is not entirely accurate because it does not reveal a phenomenon related to agentful passives mentioned in Section 6.3.3.1. Agentful passives do not necessarily contribute to identifying a human agent: 19 English agentful passives and 25 Italian agentful passives have inanimate expressed agents. The majority of these occurrences (15 in English and 17 in Italian) are totally impersonal and the human element is irretrievable or irrelevant. In the remaining instances (4 in English and 8 in Italian) the human agent is retrievable from the context or world knowledge. The analysis of these occurrences show how agentful and agentless passives are separate phenomena from the grammatical viewpoint, but, in some contexts, they may contribute to a similar effect in discourse.

6.3.4. An interpretation of the data

The analysis of the data has confirmed some of the hypotheses stated at the beginning, whereas other hypotheses have not found support in the data. The interpretation refers to the data and cannot be generalised to the English or the Italian language.

The hypothesis that the English texts would have a higher frequency of passive structures has been confirmed. Unexpectedly, however, the frequency of agentful passives is similar in the two sets of data. Agentless passives are far more frequent in English, but the division of agentless passives into sub-categories has shown that the agentless passives whose agent was easily retrievable in context have a similar occurrence in the two languages.

The overall picture offered by the findings shows that the passive in the Italian data and the passive in the English data have their respectively highest frequencies at the opposite ends of the retrievability continuum (Table 8 section 6.3.3.4.). In other words, in the English scripts the passive is a highly productive structure in the cases in which the agent is less easily retrievable or, indeed, irretrievable. In the Italian data the passive is more frequently found when the agent is either present in the clause or easily retrievable, otherwise passive *si* tends to occur.

Referring back to the three main functional domains of the passive in context (clausal topic, impersonality and transitivity), transitivity has not been investigated because its effects are not a central concern of this study; impersonalisation seems to be the main function of the English passive and topicalisation the main function of the Italian passives in the data. It is precisely this last point which had not been hypothesised at the beginning. In fact the flexibility of word order in Italian was thought to be a major effective tool to build information structure. Most probably,

however, left and right dislocation and post-verbal position of the subject in unaccusative structures (Renzi, 1988) are strategies which are more common in spoken, colloquial language than in written language, especially in text-types which tend to be rather formal.

The analysis of the data has shown that the passive is mainly used to highlight the inanimate element by backgrounding the human element (in retrievable agents) or by giving the inanimate element as the viewpoint (given information) and the human element as new information (end-focus). The overall effect is that the language becomes more factual, apparently 'objective', centred on facts and events rather than people and actions. This does not rule out the function of impersonalisation of the passive, but it is certainly less important than in English. The Italian occurrences of impersonal/generic passives can instantiate this point: out of 15 occurrences only 2 are used as the negative politeness device of impersonalisation to redress the imposition of value-judgement on the reader, 13 occurrences belong to this sub-category because the agents are generic (section 6.3.3.2.). The function of impersonalisation in Italian is mainly performed by the structures investigated in the first part of this chapter: the *si* constructions.

Another feature of the Italian passive revealed by the data is the high frequency of the auxiliary *venire*. *Venire* passives co-occur with the presence of external authority or rather 'objective', factual writing and contribute to the formal quality of the writing.

The analysis of the English data shows that out of the three functional domains of the passive, impersonality is certainly not the least important. As mentioned before, the more irretrievable the agent is the more substantial the sub-category of the passive becomes (Table 8, Section 6.3.3.4.). The restricted impersonal and the

impersonal / generic sub-categories are the most numerous with 91 and 90 occurrences respectively. Additionally the impersonal passive is often used in value-judgements or metadiscoursal expressions, redressing with negative politeness the discoursal imposition of the addresser on the addressee. This linguistic strategy is a conventionalised feature of academic writing and, in a less consistent way, of student writing. The passive is, indeed, the impersonalising strategy *par excellence* in the English data.

In both the Italian and the English data, the use of the passive has several discoursal effects: it can generalise the statement, topicalise the logical object and improve text cohesion, minimise the face-threatening act of making a claim and expressing a value-judgement, making a metadiscoursal remark to direct the reader in the discourse. These devices are recurrent in academic prose (Biber, 1988; Myers, 1989), but their use in students' texts is rather uneven. In the data, claims which are maximally redressed are comparable as imposition on the addressee to others which are minimally redressed (see, for instance, examples E1-25 and E23-8-10, E25-51-53). In other cases strong claims are made bald-on-record without any redress (see Chapter 8). It might be interesting to notice here, however, that Simpson (1990) analysed F.R. Leavis's famous article *The Great Tradition* (the opening chapter in a volume with the same title) and found an apparent contradiction in the use of modality to redress claims and the weight of the imposition. Simpson noticed that Leavis can be assertive when making major claims and highly indirect when making lesser claims. This means that a counter-intuitive use of politeness can be found both in student writing and in fully-fledged academic prose.

In the English scripts, at all events, discrepancies seem to be developmental rather than anything else. There are scripts in which the occurrence of the passive form is consistent with an attempt at more formal language, using academic writing

conventions, impersonalising the language (E13, for instance), whenever in other scripts the presence of the passive and other devices typical of academic prose are not consistent with other fairly informal linguistic devices (E12, E24, E25, among others). This phenomenon has already been noticed for the occurrence of indefinite pronoun *one* in a script rich with interpersonal devices (E24; Section 5.5.). The developmental quality of student writing, the lack of revision time and the particular type of audience influence the co-occurrence of formal and informal structures in the English scripts.

6.4. Summary of impersonalisation devices in English and in Italian

Chapters 5 and 6 have focused on the analysis of linguistic strategies directly related to the interpersonal metafunction (person markers, impersonal structures, passives). The following table summarises the features of overt impersonalisation in the scripts:

TABLE 9: Summary of impersonalisation strategies

ENGLISH		ITALIAN
21	impersonal 1st pers plur	0
3	impersonal 2nd pers	0
49	<i>one</i>	-
-	<i>si</i> constructions	60
90	impersonal passive	15
163	TOTAL	75
9.14	FREQUENCY per 1000 words	3.51

In Table 9 only completely impersonal *we*, *you* and passive occurrences have been counted. In proportion the frequency of overtly impersonal strategies is more common in English than in Italian. At this stage an interpretation of this finding is tentative and based only on the data analysed so far. The Italian texts contain fewer

overtly impersonalising features because there is the attempt to avoid personal references altogether, rather than disguising or backgrounding them. Another tentative interpretation is that the Italian texts are based more on studied facts than on value-judgements by the student, while the English texts tend to telescope the two aspects. If this is confirmed by the rest of the data analysis, it means that the impersonalisation strategies of the Italian students are encoded in the ideational aspects of language (stating ideas, contents) and they are less detectable in an analysis of the interpersonal metafunction. The English students tend to shape their own discourse and express opinions in a more independent way and therefore they need a wider range of impersonalisation strategies to redress the imposition on the addressee.

The two following chapters will explore the ways in which students express value-judgements and redress this imposition on the addressee using modals or other strategies.

CHAPTER 7

MODALITY

7.1. Introduction

Modality is fundamental to the interpersonal function of language since its presence signals something about the writer's state of knowledge regarding the propositional content of the sentence. More specifically, modality signals that the writer does not fully commit herself to the meaning of the utterance: a modalised utterance falls short of an assertion. Modality is a link between the ideational and the interpersonal metafunctions because not only can it convey the opinion or the attitude of the addresser towards the ideational content of the proposition, but it can also convey the positioning of the participants in the communicative event. The use of modality is related to the type of communicative event, the text-type and the social and discourse roles of the participants. As shown below, modality also overlaps with linguistic phenomena analysed in other chapters: metadiscourse (Chapter 9), evaluation strategies and politeness (Chapter 8).

The hypothesis to be tested in the present study concerns the different use of modality made by the English and Italian students in the data. From what has been said in previous chapters, the English students tend to present propositional content in a more personal way than the Italian students. The hypothesis is, therefore, that the English students feel a need to modalise more in their writing, whereas the Italian students feel able to be more assertive (that is limit the use of modality) because their propositional content is less personal and more based on external authoritative sources.

In the present study, there are two types of problems that affect the analysis of modality. The first problem is the cross-linguistic comparison of modality: whereas

English has a well-defined system of modal auxiliary verbs and a series of widely analysed modal expressions, Italian lacks a similar system of auxiliary verbs and expresses modality in a variety of ways. Modality as a semantic, discoursal phenomenon is usually overlooked in Italian grammars (Lepschy & Lepschy, 1981; Serianni, 1988) or else is briefly mentioned as a topic belonging to modal logic rather than descriptive grammars (Renzi & Salvi, 1991: 415-416; Simone, 1990: 335-337). The second problem is that modality is an umbrella-term which includes different types of linguistic realisations. On the one hand some of these realisations can be either centrally interpersonal (epistemic and deontic modality) or more indirectly so (Palmer, 1986, 1990, calls this 'dynamic' modality; an Italian study on different categories of modals is Di Feo, 1981). On the other hand, these realisations are grammatically diversified and include modal expressions (modal verbs, adverbs, adjectives, lexical verbs), mood as inflectional realisations of the verb and mood as clause-types (declarative, interrogative, imperative, exclamative). These forms and structures all contribute to the modal meaning of the utterance or the stretch of text. In the following pages I will identify the areas of modality analysed in this chapter, clarify the principles I have used to analyse the data and explain how the two problems mentioned above have been tackled. The second part of the chapter will compare the findings in the Italian and the English data. I will begin by making some general remarks about modality.

7.2. The concept of modality

Modality is a complex system of linguistic phenomena which has been variously analysed and described by logicians and linguists. The domain of modality has been logically related by some linguists (Palmer, 1979, 1986, 1990; Sweetser, 1982, 1990; Perkins, 1983, among others) to conceptually different orders of entities. Lyons (1977) identifies three orders of entities: physical objects (located in a three-dimensional space); 'events, processes, states-of-affairs, etc., which are located in

time and which, in English, are said to occur or take place, rather than to exist' (ibid.: 442); abstract entities, such as propositions. Modality is related to second and third order entities and prototypically conveys the speaker's opinion or attitude towards the occurrence of events or the truth of propositions.

If the scope of modality is so widely defined, the range of grammatical structures which convey modal meaning can be expected to be extremely diversified, and this is particularly so in a cross-linguistic perspective. As mentioned before, modality relates the lexico-grammatical categories of modal expressions (Perkins, 1983; Di Feo, 1981; Venier, 1986) and mood (Palmer, 1986; Simone, 1990; Lyons, 1995: 332).

The inflectional realisations of mood such as indicative, subjunctive, imperative, etc. is only the prototypical use of the word in traditional grammars. In actual fact, tense and aspect also frequently express modal meanings and, as Lyons points out, drawing a distinction between tense and mood is often difficult (Lyons, 1995: 332). The example in point would be the conditional: traditionally labelled as a tense in English grammars, it is a mood in Italian grammars.

Modality can also be encoded in clause-type: the choice between declarative, interrogative, imperative and exclamative can convey part of the subjective, non-propositional elements of meaning which can be defined as modal (Palmer, 1986: 15, 23 *et passim*; Lyons, 1995: 176 *et passim*; Simone, 1990: 335-339). Interestingly, Halliday uses the term 'mood' for the system of clause-type (see for instance 1973: 56; 1985: 72ff), showing the interconnection between these concepts. In the present study, this subjective, non-propositional aspect of the stretch of text is analysed in other chapters as belonging to specific areas of the interpersonal metafunction (see Chapter 10 in particular).

7.3. Categories of modality

The domain of modality in the most comprehensive sense is diverse and wide-ranging and different languages encode it in different ways. The present chapter will analyse only those linguistic realisations which can be labelled 'modal expressions' (as defined in this section) and some realisations of mood and tense which carry a clearly identifiable modal meaning in context. Many expressions which contribute to modality or encode modality in a more diffuse way will not be examined here and will be discussed in other chapters as interpersonal phenomena related to evaluation strategies, metadiscourse, or intertextuality (Chapters 8, 9 and 10).

The grammatical realisation of modality is most obvious in modal verbs, especially in English where, as mentioned before, they form a complex semantic network and a formally recognisable system. However, modality also informs other grammar categories and linguists such as Perkins (1983), Holmes (1983, 1988) and Palmer (1986) have attempted a general overview of grammatical categories which carry modal meaning. In particular, Holmes (1983) and Perkins (1983) for English and Di Feo (1981), Ciliberti (1984), Venier (1986) and Bazzanella (1994) for Italian highlight the necessity of studying modal expressions other than the modal verbs: the modal verbs have traditionally been considered the fundamental type of modality, and the fact that other modal expressions have a high frequency in discourse has often been disregarded.

It seems to me that this more comprehensive approach to modality is the most fruitful, not to say the only viable, in a comparative study. This 'global' approach to modality, however, poses the problem of what grammatical categories should be included as carrying modal meaning. The question is debatable. Perkins (1983) includes in his analysis tense, *if*-clauses and questions, whereas Holmes (1983,

1988) does not. Palmer (1986) offers the wider perspective of the three and examines modality from the typological point of view, including inflectional mood and clause-type (i.e. imperative, interrogative, etc.).

For the purpose of the present study, I will take into account the grammatical categories with modal meaning which can be found in my data and can be analysed in terms of the functional and conceptual modal framework presented in the following sections. More specifically, I will include the categories that follow:

1. Modal auxiliary verbs: *E11-10 This certainly cannot be the case; II-85 Si possono poi citare* / One can then quote.

Modal verbs include *can/could, may/might, must, shall/ should, will/would, need, ought to* in English. In Italian grammars do not agree about the status of modal verbs, their specific characteristics and what verbs can be considered modal or modal lexical verbs (see point 3 below). However, even if there is no clearly identifiable category of modals in Italian, there are verbs which are semantically comparable to the English modals: *dovere, potere, volere, avere da, essere da, bisogna* (Renzi, Salvi & Cardinaletti, 1995: 56), and some uses of the verb *sapere*.

2. Modal adjectives, participles and adverbs (as defined in Perkins, 1983: 66-93): *E3-14 It is possible to consider this; II-44 E' evidente quindi* 'It is evident therefore'.

This category includes expressions such as: *It is clear, It is obvious, undoubtedly, apparently, seemingly, è chiaro* 'it is clear', *indubbiamente* 'undoubtedly', *senz'altro* 'no doubt', *è vero* 'it is true', etc.

3. Modal lexical verbs (ibid.: 94-99): *E8-14 this does seem to be the case*; *I9-28 sembra aver dimenticato* 'he seems to have forgotten'.

Some of the verbs included are: *appear*, *think*, *suggest*, *sembrare* 'seem', *pensare* 'think', *parere* 'appear', etc.

4. Modal nouns (ibid.: 86-87), that is nouns such as *claim*, *suggestion*, *dubbio* 'doubt', *incertezza* 'uncertainty', etc. There are no nominalisation of this kind used with modal meaning in the data.

5. Tense and mood overtly expressing modality. Conditional: *E13-106-107 if its designs were not evident they would pass the casual reader by*; *I6-7 oserei dire* 'I would venture to say'. Future: *I4-91 saranno tipici* 'they will be typical'. Imperative: *I5-54 Si pensi* 'let us think'. Subjunctive: *I3-68 o se piuttosto non sia* 'or whether it is'. The discussion of the data will clarify what examples have been included in the count.

6. Other lexical expressions (e.g. *to be up to somebody to do something*). There are no examples in the English data. In the Italian data there are a few instances of expressions such as: *I17-104 non va considerata* 'it should not be considered'.

Borrowing the term from Perkins, I will generally refer to the linguistic forms which convey modality as 'modal expressions'. Tense and mood will be included only when they carry a clearly identifiable modal meaning. The future, for instance, is often linked to various kinds of modal meaning: epistemic modality in Italian is frequently expressed by a future: *sarà arrivato a Londra, ora* 'he will probably have arrived in London by now' (see also Palmer, 1990: 137-138).

Italian is a language that renders tense and mood mainly inflectionally, while English expresses the future and the conditional using modal verbs. Mood as an inflectional category is particularly relevant for Italian where the conditional forms a morphological category of its own (whereas in English it is formed by modal markers), and the subjunctive is still widely used (whereas in English it is only a limited linguistic phenomenon). In Italian the modal meaning of the subjunctive in subordinate clauses is related to the meaning of the main clause. In other words, the subjunctive in subordinate clauses has to be analysed in the linguistic context where it appears: its modal meaning can only be understood if related to the linguistic environment it belongs to (see Renzi & Salvi, 1991).

As mentioned before, the status of the conditional is less clear-cut: in Italian it is traditionally considered a mood (Renzi & Salvi, 1991), whereas in English descriptive grammars it is labelled as a tense. Semantically, the conditional can function both as tense and mood in both languages. The traditional label of 'tense' will be used to refer to it, even though its functions in the two languages cover a broader area.

Modality is a multifaceted phenomenon and the numerous studies devoted to it have offered several different models of categorisation. The main two types of modality are 'epistemic modality' and 'root or deontic modality'. Palmer (1979, 1986, 1990) distinguishes a third type called 'dynamic', following von Wright's terminology (1951). The same modal expressions may convey different modal functions in different contexts, which means that there is no clear-cut way of categorising modal expressions: only the context can help the reader understand their function in the discourse.

In the sections which follow, the two main types of modality (epistemic and root) will be defined and discussed, and the criteria of data analysis followed in the study will be explained.

7.4. Epistemic modality

This category (whose name derives from the Greek word for 'knowledge') is widely accepted among linguists (Jespersen, 1924; von Wright, 1951; Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1979, 1986, 1990; Coates, 1983; Perkins, 1983; Mitchell, 1988; Sweetser, 1982, 1990). In Lyons' words, epistemic modality 'is concerned with matters of knowledge, belief' (Lyons, 1977: 739) and therefore refers to third-order entities, i.e. propositions. In using epistemic modality, the addresser expresses the extent to which a proposition is believed to be true, usually in the light of the amount of evidence available.

Epistemic modality is central to text-types which focus on discussions of relations between propositions such as argumentative writing and academic prose (especially in the humanities) (Chafe, 1985; Biber, 1988). It is possible, therefore, to hypothesise that epistemic modality is relevant to the text-type examined in this study. More precisely, epistemic modality is a linguistic device which is closely connected to the attitude of the addresser towards the propositional content and towards the addressee within the specific communicative event they are engaged in.

Holmes (1983: 100) establishes an important distinction between modal meaning and affective meaning: epistemic modality conveys the speaker's commitment to the truth of a proposition, but, at the same time, it conveys an affective meaning in that it modifies the illocutionary force of an assertion or denial. This affective meaning is most related to politeness and indirectness and is crucial in a study of interpersonal features of language because it reveals the commitment of the

addresser vis-à-vis his/her value-judgement and the distance from the addressee. Tentativeness as a politeness strategy has been analysed in Chapter 8 together with evaluation strategies and attitude markers. In fact, in many cases, politeness and modality overlap especially within the domain of epistemic modality. A tentative modalised proposition can convey the uncertainty of the writer about its contents, but also the desire of the addresser not to impinge upon the addressee's convictions in a way which would sound too assertive. These two levels can rarely be told apart, they mingle and interact in the discourse.

Dealing with this issue from the viewpoint of critical discourse analysis, Hodge & Kress (1988) speak of 'affinity' between the addresser and the addressee. Referring to this use of modality, Fairclough (1992b) argues that:

expressing high affinity may have little to do with one's commitment to a proposition, but a lot to do with a desire to show solidarity (Fairclough, 1992b: 160).

Modality which shows a low degree of affinity may indicate that power difference is at issue (Hodge & Kress, 1988: 123). As mentioned before, it is rarely possible or appropriate to tease out the two levels of modality and decide whether they refer to the validity / truth of the proposition, or to the 'speaker's attitude to the addressee in the context of utterance' (Holmes, 1984: 348).

7.4.1. The main notional aspects of epistemic modality: possibility, necessity and prediction

Two of the main notional aspects of epistemic modality are the necessity and possibility of a proposition being true. In terms of modal verbs, these notions of epistemic necessity and possibility are prototypically expressed by *must* and *may*:

You must find it quite a change being back in London.
You may not like the idea of it, but let me explain. (Palmer, 1990: 51, 53)

In the data analysis this distinction has not been maintained as such because of the complexity of natural data. A distinction based on the notions of necessity and possibility has been tentatively drawn for the purpose of the analysis: expressions of certainty and doubt. As will be explained in the following section, this distinction is not uncontroversial, but it has been kept because it gives an insight (however tentative) into the different uses of epistemic modality in the two languages.

Another notional category of epistemic modality is prediction as represented by *will* and it refers 'to what it is reasonable to expect' (Palmer, 1979: 47). As Palmer points out, *will* 'indicates a confident statement, *must* suggests a confident conclusion from the evidence available' (ibid.: 47). The epistemic use of *will* can refer to a present or a future situation, and in the latter case its use might not be easily distinguishable from a future meaning. Moreover, epistemic prediction is close in meaning to epistemic probability, but Palmer (1990) keeps them separate because epistemic *will* indicates a judgement of the addresser, not 'the strength of the speaker's belief' (Palmer, 1990: 57):

E3-4-5 [...] there will be points on which disagreement is possible.

Prediction often overlaps with 'futurity', another category used by Palmer and mainly expressed by modals *will* and *would*. I included futurity under the label of 'prediction', since the future occurrences in the data have an epistemic function (see also Coates, 1983). Prediction and futurity can also refer to an event or action which happened in the past as seen from the viewpoint of an even more remote past. In this case the epistemic modal is used in a totally objective way since the addresser is certain that that event took place. In the Italian data all the occurrences of prediction belong to this category:

I3-106-107 Questo è ciò che verrà trasmesso al Decadentismo: il senso di insicurezza, di scissione interiore [...]

This is what will be passed on to Decadentism: the sense of uncertainty, the division of the self [...]

7.4.2. The concepts of certainty and doubt

The three main notions of epistemic modality (possibility, necessity and prediction) can be expressed in a number of different grammatical structures. Perkins (1983) and Holmes (1983, 1988), among others, deal in detail with a variety of structures which are used to convey modality (see Section 7.3.).

Epistemic modality ranges from the expression of certainty about the truth of a proposition to the expression of tentativeness and doubt. The semantic categories of certainty and doubt can be related to the modal notions of necessity and possibility mentioned in the previous section. As far as modal verbs are concerned, some convey a lower degree of certainty than others. Palmer (1979, 1990), for instance, defines *might*, *would* and *should* as the 'tentative forms' of epistemic modality. Holmes (1983) argues for a 'scale of certainty' which ranges from 'certain', to 'probable' and, at the other end of the spectrum, to 'possible' (ibid.: 102). The validity of this intuitively acceptable continuum is undermined by the attempt, in a subsequent article (Holmes, 1988), to categorise the modal verbs along this scale. If it is true that some of the modals are more tentative than others, it is also true that their categorisation on a scale is somewhat arbitrary because their meaning partly overlaps, and the context plays an important role in determining the degree of certainty and doubt. Additionally it is particularly difficult to use this categorisation for modal expressions like, for instance, the epistemic lexical verbs: *believe*, *suggest*, *claim*.

The concepts of doubt and certainty are linked to the issues of evidentiality and hedging, complex phenomena which are diffuse, partly overlapping and categorised in different ways by different linguists (on evidentiality see the collection of articles

in Chafe and Nichols, 1986; on hedging see Prince *et al.*, 1982; Skelton, 1988; Caffi, 1990; Raynaud, 1992; Salager-Meyer, 1994). The concepts of doubt and certainty are also closely linked to another main linguistic device in the interpersonal use of language: politeness. The phenomenon of politeness is examined at length in the chapter about evaluative strategies (Chapter 8) and includes discussion of hedging and evidentiality which are relevant to the present study. The same chapter also mentions another characteristic which can be considered inherent to student writing: expressing uncertainty might be due to lack of knowledge rather than politeness strategies. Lack of knowledge about a fact cannot always be distinguished from an academic use of hedging.

While bearing in mind all these difficulties in the categorisation of doubt and certainty and the fact that these are not two contrasting concepts, but poles on a continuum, the analysis of epistemic modality has shown that keeping a distinction between expressions which are closer to the concept of doubt and expressions closer to certainty is useful in the comparison of the data in the two languages. The distinction has been kept: the instances of epistemic modality do not exactly 'belong' to doubt or to certainty (as Tables 1 and 2 show in Section 7.7.), but they tend towards one or the other end of the continuum in that particular context. It is therefore the context which is criterial in the categorisation and helps to disambiguate the controversial instances. The following are instances in the data of expressions which are closer to doubt (first two) or to certainty (latter two):

E2-25-26 *I think that in some ways form has become less sophisticated [...]*

I6-81-83 *Direi che [...] troviamo più che altro delle figure retoriche di carattere decadentista < sic > [...]*

I would say that we find, rather than anything else, stylistic devices of a decadent character

E8-26-27 *Certainly there have been deviations from this path [...]*

I8-124-125 *Quello che è certo è che la Scapigliatura ha risentito dell'eredità romantica [...]*

What is certain is that Scapigliatura was influenced by Romanticism

Instances which are intermediate between doubt and certainty have been categorised using the criterion of exclusion:

15-83 *Ritengo perciò che [...]*

Therefore, I think / I maintain that

The instance cannot be categorised as expressing certainty, so it has been included under doubt.

7.4.3. Subjectivity and objectivity

The notion of commitment of the addresser towards the ideational meaning of the stretch of text introduces another basic issue in modality: objectivity and subjectivity, where subjectivity means a certain degree of addresser's involvement.

As Palmer (1986) argues, following Lyons (1977):

Modality in language is [...] concerned with subjective characteristics of an utterance, and it could even be further argued that subjectivity is an essential criterion for modality. Modality could, that is to say, be defined as the grammaticalization of speakers' (subjective) attitudes and opinions. (Palmer, 1986: 16)

Lyons (1977) acknowledges the fact that the distinction between subjective and objective epistemic modality is theoretically valid and maintains that the subjective variety is at the core of this modality, while the objective variety contains an 'unqualified, or categorical, I-say-so component' (ibid.: 799). The very essence of subjective epistemic modality expresses the speaker's reliance on his/her knowledge of the situation in order to estimate the factuality of the proposition.

Whereas in general terms the core of epistemic modality is subjective and objective occurrences are peripheral (Palmer, 1979, 1990; Coates, 1983), in actual fact, the decision as to whether modality is used rather more objectively or subjectively is not always straightforward (Palmer, 1986: 16-17). As far as modal verbs are concerned, there are no distinct sets of epistemic modals for objective and

subjective use. In many cases, however, the context can help the reader understand whether the addresser is drawing a personal conclusion or is reporting somebody else's opinion. As Mitchell (1988) points out:

The clearest way of indicating objective epistemic modality is to prefix the sentence with a phrase like *It is thought that* / *They say* / *I gather* / *Apparently*. (ibid.: 187)

The environment in which the modality is inserted can help disambiguate its subjective / objective value.

Objectivity and subjectivity are closely related to the interpersonal metafunction of language and therefore the present study will retain this distinction both for epistemic and for root modality. The analysis of the data reveals that what seems an apparent dichotomy is another continuum of occurrences ranging from an overtly subjective modality expressed in the first person singular (*it seems to me, I would suggest that*) to a modality which can be labelled as objective since the student writer is reporting somebody else's judgement and conclusion. In this latter case, the modality might be subjective for the original source of the utterance, but since the student reports it, its modality becomes once removed from the addresser of the script.

Modality has been categorised as objective only in instances where there is linguistic evidence that its use is reported or the student writer wants to convey this impression. Some examples are uncontroversial:

E13-21-23 Many authors argue the worth of appealing indirectly to the readers' soul and sensibilities as a way to reach their opinions.

I1-63-66 Natalino Sapegno parla di 'una esigenza di novità', piuttosto che di una effettiva proposta di elementi innovativi, dietro al loro atteggiamento non ci sarebbe altro che il vuoto.

Natalino Sapegno speaks of 'a desire for novelty', rather than of an effective proposal for innovative elements, behind their attitude there were, in his opinion, only empty values.

In the last instance, English needs a paraphrase (in his opinion) to express the modal meaning of the Italian conditional which signals reported inference (Renzi, 1991).

The problem with this categorisation is that in some cases the student decides to report somebody else's opinion because she shares it, which would mean that she shares the use of the modality too. Alternatively, the student reports somebody else's opinion because she does not want to (or cannot) express her own idea about the propositional content, in which case she might share the use of modality or she might not. The possible answer to these remarks is that, in any case, the student relies upon an objective (and often authoritative) report of the opinion as the surface linguistic realisation. If it is not explicitly stated, her own agreement or disagreement cannot be inferred and, therefore, the modality used in the reported opinion can be counted as objective, or, more precisely, not subjectively determined by the writer.

At the other end of the spectrum, subjective modality includes the prototypically subjective occurrences expressed in the first person singular, rare instances of second person and occurrences in the first person plural. As seen in the previous chapters, the use of the first person plural is often very close to those structures which have been labelled impersonal, that is structures which do not clearly identify the human referent, but leave it generic or indefinite. Therefore, the occurrences of modality appearing in the first person plural constitute the link between prototypically subjective instances and the middle section of the continuum.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the first person plural is a form that academic writing and student writing largely use because of its flexibility and ambiguity. Some instances refer to the participants in the communicative events, other instances are closer to what has been generally labelled in Chapters 5 and 6 as the impersonal use

of person markers. The following are examples of epistemic modality used in a first person plural environment:

E11-14-19 If we take Joyce's Ulysses as an example, [...] we may feel immediately inclined to judge modernist forms as sophisticated [...]

E24-33 we have concluded that [...]

I11-177 [Questo argomento] ci porterebbe un po' fuori dal nostro discorso.
This topic would divert us from our topic.

The instances which occupy the middle section of the cline have been labelled 'subjective/objective' because it is impossible to specify further the use of the modality. The addresser seems to cash in on this indeterminacy by avoiding committing herself overtly. The instances of 'subjective/objective' modality range from instances which are similar to some uses of 'subjective we' modality to uses which are similar to totally objective modality (see 7.5.2., 7.7.1. and 7.7.2.).

As already mentioned, the distinction between objective and subjective modality is maintained because it yields insights into the use of modality in the data. Objectivity and subjectivity, however, are two factors which cannot be controlled or judged in absolute terms by the analyst of a text for two fundamental reasons: first of all, this would entail a judgement on the addresser's intentions (which are impossible to verify); secondly, ambiguity is one of the characteristics of language which is exploited by both addresser and addressee in all types of text. The present analysis, therefore, relies on the linguistic evidence available in the text and the context and categorises modality as rendered by the addresser.

7.5. Root modality

Modality which is not epistemic is far less easy to categorise under a single functional label and some linguists have identified several types (von Wright, 1951; Rescher, 1968; Palmer, 1979, 1990). Most descriptions of modality, however, have

settled for considering two main types of modality: epistemic, referring to third-order entities and deontic or root modality, referring to second-order entities in Lyons' classification (see above 7.2.). The majority of British scholars (Lyons, 1977; Palmer, 1979, 1986, 1990; Perkins, 1983; Huddleston, 1988; Mitchell, 1988) have adopted the label deontic, a word derived from the Greek 'deon': 'what is binding'. Lyons (1977), speaking about the origins of deontic modality, argues that it responds to the 'desiderative' and 'instrumental' function of language: on the one hand it is used 'to express or indicate wants and desires and, on the other, to get things done by imposing one's will on other agents.' (ibid.: 826).

In spite of the etymology of the word, 'deontic' is generally used in a broad sense: 'the speaker is concerned with getting things done, with bringing about the occurrence or non occurrence of potential **acts**' (Mitchell, 1988: 178). However, deontic modality is prototypically characterised by an element of will (Jespersen, 1924; Palmer, 1986) and a problem arises with modal meanings which do not contain this element. Palmer (1979, 1990) calls 'dynamic' all the modalities which are neither epistemic and nor purely deontic such as:

Signs are the only things you can observe.
Who knows? It can go either way. (Palmer, 1990: 84)

Palmer accepts as deontic only the modals which convey permission, command or imposed necessity; modals conveying ability, existence, circumstance etc. are considered dynamic and 'not strictly a kind of modality at all' (ibid.: 36). Palmer realises that the distinction between deontic and dynamic cannot always be easily drawn and admits that what he calls 'dynamic' could be called 'objective deontic' as opposed to a 'subjective deontic' modality. In the latter case, for instance, the authority of the imposition would be clear (*you must do this, I want you to*), in the former case the authority would not be clear (*you have to do this*) (Palmer, 1990: 131-132). This ambiguity can be exploited in discourse to obfuscate the authority

which is behind an imposition or a permission: in some cases an apparently objective modality is used to avoid an overt involvement of the addresser in the proposition. Therefore, whereas Palmer's categorisation is tenable semantically, discursively the distinction between deontic and dynamic is often difficult to draw. Palmer recognises that the use of dynamic modality can be objected to, but considers the distinction useful for his categorisation of modals (Palmer, 1990: 132).

Some scholars (Hofmann, 1976; Coates, 1983; Sweetser, 1982, 1990) have adopted the term *root modality* to define all 'these meanings which denote real-world obligation, permission, or ability' (Sweetser, 1990: 49). Root, therefore, might be considered more comprehensive than deontic (which is more representative of obligation and permission), as Coates (1983) points out. Coates also objects to Palmer's category of dynamic modals because she argues that non-epistemic modals can be seen as related in a cline rather than divided into categories:

[...] all the meanings of non-Epistemic MUST (for example) are related and can be shown to lie on a cline extending from strong 'Obligation' (the core) to cases at the periphery where the sense of 'Obligation' is extremely weak (where a more appropriate paraphrase would be 'it is important that ...'). (Coates, 1983: 21)

This point made by Coates explains her choice of calling non-epistemic modals *root* rather than *deontic*. This unitary approach to non-epistemic modals would be confirmed by the way in which they are sometimes ambiguously used in discourse, as mentioned above.

As far as my data are concerned, they contain very few purely deontic modal expressions (expressing permission, command or imposed necessity):

E7-55-56 *Every time a rule is broken it allows the next generation to go further.*
 E24-63 *Remember, it is a personal attitude that we are talking about now [...]*

Due to the low frequency of prototypically deontic modality, which was to be expected in the text-type analysed here, I will adopt the broader term 'root' to indicate the modality affecting second-order entities.

7.5.1. Metadiscoursal and argumentative root modality

As seen in the previous section, root modals have a wide variety of uses and, whereas all of these tap into the interpersonal metafunction of language, only some are overtly interpersonal and are relevant for the present study. In the categorisation of root modality, the semantically weakest and emptiest use of modality (dynamic modality such as *can* used with verbs of perception and cognition) has been excluded from the analysis for two reasons: first of all its status as modality is controversial, secondly this type of modality is frequent in English (where *can*, for instance, is almost grammaticalised as a device to signal the perceptual or cognitive state) but rare in Italian and therefore the data are not comparable.

The instances of root modality that have been examined here are directly related to the textual choices the writer makes in the script. More precisely, root modality has been analysed only when it appears in metadiscoursal instances (metadiscourse is reflexive use of language, that is discourse referring to itself, see Chapter 9) and in instances related to the pursuing of the argument of the discourse, instances, that is, that give structure to the argument and contribute to introducing a step forward in it. The former type will be called 'metadiscoursal root', the second 'argumentative root'. In both cases the verbs used with modality tend to be mental and verbal processes but are not exclusively so.

The following are examples of metadiscoursal and argumentative modality respectively in the English and Italian data:

E10-53 shall we say

studies about creolisation and first language acquisition (see Giacalone Ramat, 1995: 270-272) which show how epistemic modality is formed or acquired after deontic modality.

More importantly for the present study, Sweetser also mentions that there are instances where verbal processes neither solely refer to the sociophysical world nor to the epistemic world: some modalised verbal processes belong to the 'conversational' world, which seems to have peculiar qualities of its own since it does not seem to matter 'whether they apply to the production of a given form or to the production of a given content' (ibid.: 72). Among other examples, Sweetser quotes the following:

Editor to journalist: "OK, Peking *can* be Beijing; but you can't use 'Praha' for Prague." (ibid.: 71)

The three domains of the sociophysical world, the epistemic world and the conversational world are related and they cannot always be clearly distinguished.

In a similar way it is possible to argue that the instances of metadiscoursal and argumentative modality belong to root modality, but form a special sub-category within it because they are related to the discoursal world (and therefore also encompass Sweetser's conversational modality). Adopting Sweetser's viewpoint, it would be possible to argue that discoursal modality is based on forces and barriers due to the mental and cognitive act (as in root modality), but these are also related to metaphorical forces and barriers due to premises (as in epistemic modality).

Discoursal modality is particularly relevant in a text-type such as the one exemplified in the data. It could be also hypothesised that discoursal modality and the close relation between epistemic and root modality are particularly relevant in argumentative prose (and therefore in academic writing). This would be due to the

fact that argumentative writing, especially the most theoretical texts, is based on speculations about theories and ideas, rather than facts. This hypothesis, however, could find validity only if tested on natural data belonging to academic writing or other argumentative prose: a field for further research.

The similarities between root and epistemic modality are also due to other factors. First of all the notional domains of necessity and possibility appear in both modalities and the issue of subjectivity and objectivity has to be equally addressed in both root and epistemic modality. Secondly, there are other phenomena in the data that contribute to relating epistemic and root modality: clusters of modality, mixed modality and mergers. Before explaining what is meant by these labels (Sections 7.6.1., 7.6.2.), notional categories and the concepts of objectivity and subjectivity will be examined.

7.5.2. Notional categories of root modality

Like epistemic modality, root modality has the two basic notions of possibility and necessity prototypically expressed by the modals *can* and *need/must* (granting permission or exemption and expressing obligation or prohibition). Other notions of root modality which have been variously categorised by scholars can be grouped under two major categories, following Lyons (1977) and Mitchell (1988): 1. decision and volition; 2. desirability and preferability. The first category, represented by the modals *will* and *shall*, includes subcategories such as intention, promise, pure volition; the second category includes advice. The actual semantics of modality, particularly of root modality (far less homogeneous than the epistemic variety), is much more complex.

In the present study, notional categories in root modality have not been analysed in the data because they did not yield relevant cross-linguistic insights into the main

focus of the study, that is the interpersonal metafunction. Moreover, the fragmentation of notional categories in root modality make them a cumbersome and imprecise tool of analysis in a cross-linguistic perspective.

The data have been analysed following two main categorisations: the metadiscoursal/argumentative sub-division and the subjective/objective continuum. This latter categorisation is the topic of the next section.

The choice of this simplified categorisation is justified by the following considerations: 1. the necessity of a framework which is comprehensive enough to be applied to two languages; 2. the purpose of the framework is not a theoretical analysis of modality, but a description of modality in context; 3. the necessity of a framework which is sufficiently precise, but also sufficiently flexible to categorise types of modality other than modal verbs.

7.5.3. The subjective/objective continuum

Root modality, like epistemic modality, can be analysed on a continuum which ranges from more overtly subjective instances to more overtly objective instances. In theory, root modals can be said to present in English a set of subjective forms (*must*, auxiliary *need*) and a set of more objective forms (*have to*, non-auxiliary *need*). In Italian there is no such division in the modal expressions. In fact, even in English, only the context might reveal (but not always) whether the addresser is totally involved, not involved at all, or partly involved as member of a social body who is responsible for imposing the obligation or granting the permission, etc. (see Palmer, 1986: 102). This ambiguity between subjective and objective meaning is widely exploited in discourse at various levels as a pragmatic resource of the language. As with epistemic modality, the language analyst is not always in a

position to decide what the real deontic source is and whether the addresser is that source or just associates herself with it.

Even bearing in mind this uncertainty, it is not possible in the present study to discard the continuum subjective/objective. Using criteria similar to those adopted for epistemic modality and described in Section 7.4.3., instances of discoursal root modality have been categorised as subjective (when expressed in first and second person singular or plural), as cases belonging to the middle section of the subjective/objective continuum (when expressed in structures referred to as impersonal), and objective (when the modality belongs to a reported statement).

The following are examples from the data of the sub-division described above:

E10-77 I would put forward the argument (root metadiscoursal subjective, 1st person singular)

E24-63 remember (root metadiscoursal subjective, 2nd person, deontic)

E13-96 we may say (root metadiscoursal subjective, 1st person plural)

I13-1 dobbiamo considerare

we must take into consideration (root metadiscoursal subjective, 1st person plural, deontic)

I5-54 Si pensi 'Let us consider' (root metadiscoursal subjective/objective, deontic)

E8-50-51 one would be advised to take a more cautious approach (root argumentative subjective/objective)

E11-45 can be analysed (root argumentative objective because reported)

The instances above have been chosen to exemplify the continuum of subjectivity/objectivity and the way in which the language user exploits the flexibility of modality in context. Occurrence I5-54 is apparently impersonal (the use of this rather imprecise term has been explained in Section 6.2.2.2.), in fact it is an appeal to the reader for joint action. It is similar to *Let us consider...*, but expressed by impersonal *si* + subjunctive (hortative) which has deontic meaning (Renzi, 1988). Some occurrences belonging to the middle of the continuum are expressed in such a way that they seem to be generally acceptable and almost 'objective'. Occurrence E8-50-51 is a case in point.

The use of modality is further complicated by the phenomena described in the following section: mergers, clusters and mixed modality.

7.6. Epistemic and root modality in mergers, clusters and mixed occurrences

Whereas from the theoretical viewpoint root and epistemic modality are different, when examining real data it is not always easy or possible to draw a distinction between the two. Not only are root and epistemic modality linked etymologically, but their use in modern-day English and Italian is intertwined and sometimes overlapping.

Three are the linguistic phenomena which are particularly noticeable in the data of the present study: mergers, and the related phenomena of clusters and mixed modality.

7.6.1. Mergers

'Merger' is a label used by Coates (1983) to indicate those instances of modality which, given a context, could have different interpretations. For the analyst, and probably the language user herself, it is impossible to decide which is the 'correct' reading because both are suitable in context.

Coates (1983) gives, among many others, the following example of a merger: *shall* has here elements of intention (root) and prediction (epistemic):

In sum, he was one of the people who helped me with my growing pains, and I shall always be grateful. (ibid.: 195)

In the data analysed in the present study (all belonging to the middle section subjective/objective), the English scripts have 20 instances of merger, out of which

12 are found in E14. This means that the count is skewed because of the high frequency of mergers in this one script.

In the Italian data there are only two examples of merger. This might be due to the lower frequency of modals in Italian (as will be shown in Tables 1 and 2, Section 7.7.) or to the fact that there are fewer modal verbs in Italian than in English and in the data it is mainly modal verbs which occur as mergers, rather than other modal expressions.

Here are two occurrences of mergers which have been categorised separately from either root and epistemic modality, since they belong to both:

E3-42 Other arguments may be drawn from these three plays [...]

E16-66 [...] notiamo negli scapigliati caratteristiche che li potrebbero avvicinare al Decadentismo.

we notice in the Scapigliati characteristics which could be similar to Decadent ones.

When analysed in context, some instances of mergers tend to be closer to one or to the other type of modality. In a context where epistemic modality is likely to occur, the merger will be easily read as epistemic. A clear example of this is script E14: it contains 12 mergers, but the linguistic environment influences the reading process in such a way that several instances may be interpreted as epistemic (E14-39, E14-41, E14-47, E14-50, E14-51). This phenomenon would tie in with Coates's model of 'fuzzy sets' rather than clear-cut categories of modals (Coates, 1983).

Mergers represent the overlapping part of what can be considered a cline from root to epistemic modals. Another level in the cline is what has been called here 'mixed modality', the topic of the next section together with clusters.

7.6.2. Mixed modality and clusters

Mixed modality and clusters are related phenomena in natural occurrences of modal expressions. In the present study, occurrences containing 2 or more modal expressions of different kind (epistemic and root together) have been labelled 'mixed modality'. Occurrences containing 2 or more modal expressions of the same kind (either root or epistemic) have been labelled 'modal clusters'.

Mixed modality is the next step after mergers in the cline of meaning: root and epistemic combine in mixed modality and contribute to conveying the modal meaning of the utterance. Clusters, instead, belong to one end of the continuum, since they foreground and emphasise (by means of repetition) the same type of modality.

7.6.2.1. Mixed modality

Mixed modality can be found both in the English (E2-1; E8-43; E10-51; E11-63) and in the Italian data (I3-93; I6-7; I7-25; I7-81; I19-95):

I3-93 Ma non si può certo trascurare il Tarchetti di Una nobile follia.

But it is certainly not possible to overlook Tarchetti, the author of Una nobile follia.

I6-7 [...] oserei dire 'I would venture to say'

I7-25 si può certo affermare

it is certainly possible to argue

E8-43 If this can be considered a more sophisticated form of verse, then [...]

E11-63 [...] how can we ever be sure if our own free will directs our life [...]?

The mixed modality found in the data have a characteristic in common: each instance has a 'dominant' modality which influences the interpretation of the stretch of text. In I3-93, I7-25, E8-43 the dominant modality is root; in I6-7, E11-63 the dominant modality is epistemic.

In the cases where the modal components of the same mixed modality have an autonomous meaning, they have been counted separately (it is the case of I7-25). In

cases such as I6-7 where *oserei* (I would venture, root) cannot be found on its own, only one instance of modality has been counted.

Example I6-7 is rather interesting because it shows the complex interaction of modality in naturally occurring text. *Oserei dire* is a hedge that occurs at the end of the sentence and modifies retroactively the force of the point made in the sentence. It comes as an afterthought on the part of the student, and it makes explicit and at the same time modalises what the student has already done: *dire*. The act of saying, already carried out, is expressed as if the student is still deciding whether to perform it or not. What can be also noticed is that here root modality reinforces the overall epistemic meaning of the utterance. The example well represents the complex balance of modality that naturally occurring texts can display.

7.6.2.2. Clusters

Clusters are rare in the English data (four examples, given below) and there seems to be only one in the Italian data. Even though clusters are a rather peripheral phenomenon, they cannot be ignored because they highlight modality by repeating the same type of modality in the same stretch of text. The global result of the clusters in context is an emphasis on modality (due to complexity of the issue, uncertainty of the writer or politeness strategies). In the occurrences below, all belonging to epistemic modality, the first cluster expresses firmer commitment, the others tentativeness:

E15-83 they cannot possibly not be affected

E12-7 I would be inclined to state

E25-14 this should surely devalue poets

E7-42-43 Perhaps the step on from this may not be more sophisticated but is certainly another aspect of linguistic experimentation.

I13-161 questo può essere anche vero
this may well be true

Four of these examples involve the combination modal auxiliary and epistemic adverb or adjective investigated in Halliday (1976), whereas the example E12-7 is a past conditional used to mitigate the imposition of a present stative verb.

Mergers, mixed modality and clusters have been examined at length because they are phenomena which tend to be overlooked in studies of modality. In naturally occurring text, however, these instances are commonly found and contribute to the complexity of modality in use: they show the relation between root and epistemic modality and the delicate balance of modality in texts. This balance can be hypothesised to be different in different text-types because the presence of modality in the discourse is closely influenced by the relationship between the participants in the communicative event, the type of event, etc.

7.7. The data analysis

Tables 1 and 2 (whose headings have been commented on in the previous sections) clearly show the higher frequency of modality in the English data, as hypothesised at the beginning of the chapter. The controversial point is to what extent the difference is due to the discrepancy in the use of modality in the two language systems or to the variation within the conventions of the text-type at hand. The question would need further study and quantitative-based research. As far as I am aware, there are no quantitative comparative studies in this field. The next sections are a qualitative commentary of the tendencies shown in the two tables.

7.7. The data analysis

TABLE 1: Modality in the English data

ROOT MODALITY					
	subjective		subj/objective		objective
	<i>I</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>we</i>	impers.	reported opinion
METADISCOURSAL 37 (0.20%)	5	1	10	21	
ARGUMENTATIVE 59 (0.33%)	1	1	14	37	6
TOTAL 96 (0.50%)	6	2	24	58	6

MERGERS					
	subjective		subj/objective		objective
	<i>I</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>we</i>	impers.	reported opinion
METADISCOURSAL				5	
ARGUMENTATIVE				15	
TOTAL 20 (0.11%)				20	
NOTES: E14 has 12 mergers and skews the count					

EPISTEMIC MODALITY					
	subjective		subj/objective		objective
	<i>I</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>we</i>	impers.	reported opinion
CERTAIN 38	1			37	
UNCERTAIN 127	18		6	93	10
PREDICTION 37				31	6
TOTAL: 202 (1.13%)	19		6	161	16

TABLE 2: Modality in the Italian data

ROOT MODALITY					
	subjective		subj/objective	objective	
	<i>I</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>we</i>	impers.	reported opinion
METADISCOURSAL 56 (0.26%)	1	1	14	40	
ARGUMENTATIVE 17 (0.07%)			4	9	4
TOTAL 73 (0.34%)	1	1	18	49	4

MERGERS					
	subjective		subj/objective	objective	
	<i>I</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>we</i>	impers.	reported opinion
METADISCOURSAL					
ARGUMENTATIVE				2	
TOTAL 2 (0.00%)				2	

EPISTEMIC MODALITY					
	subjective		subj/objective	objective	
	<i>I</i>	<i>you</i>	<i>we</i>	impers.	reported opinion
EVIDENTE 25				20	5
INCERTO 34	10		1	13	10
PREDICTION 40					40
TOTAL: 99 (0.46%)	10		1	33	55

7.7.1. General remarks

Not only is the use of modality, both root and epistemic, more widespread in the English data if compared to the Italian data, but also the different types of occurrence confirm a trend noticed in the analysis of other linguistic features and, in particular, in the politeness strategies used by the students (Chapter 8).

By looking at the occurrences, it is possible to draw the conclusions that on the one hand English students tend to modalise their text more because they express opinions and structure the argumentation in a more student-centred and personalised way (this would be confirmed by the variety of person markers used with modality in the English data). On the other hand, the Italian students heavily rely on what they can 'report' about the topic, that is what they can confidently believe to be accepted critical ideas about the subject matter. As will be mentioned in the chapter dealing with politeness strategies (Chapter 8), Italian students tend to use more than English students categorical assertions which are defined by Lyons as 'modally unqualified', that is statements which are unqualified in terms of possibility and necessity (Lyons, 1977: 745). Categorical assertions 'display complete commitment to propositional information' (Simpson, 1990: 72). This is one of the many examples:

11-116-120 Il romanzo di Tarchetti, Una nobile follia è improntato su una convivenza fra Romanticismo e Decadentismo, c'è una proposta di valori romantici che vengono affermati per essere poi smentiti dalla successione degli avvenimenti.
The novel by Tarchetti, Una nobile follia, is based on a co-existence of Romanticism and Decadentism; romantic values are offered and stated but they are then denied by the way in which the events develop.

Categorical assertions are not tentative; on the contrary, they are, as their name indicates, 'assertive' strategies. This is why Lyons argues that 'there is no epistemically stronger statement than a categorical assertion' (Lyons, 1977: 809). Unmodalised statements can be found both in the English and in the Italian data, but

given the higher frequency of modality in English, it is possible to assume that the Italian students use unmodalised statements more than the English students.

The occurrences in the data show that even modality expressing certainty can be used to hedge a statement, conveying it in a less assertive way than a categorical statement:

E7-42-43 Perhaps the step on from this may not be more sophisticated but is certainly another aspect of linguistic experimentation.

Tables 1 and 2 yield insights into aspects of modality which are connected to other linguistic features analysed in this study: the next section will examine the continuum from subjective to objective linguistic forms.

7.7.2. The subjective/objective continuum in the data

The higher frequency of modality in the two languages occurs in the middle section of the continuum, that is 'impersonal' occurrences are the most frequent. As mentioned in Chapter 6, the label 'impersonal' is an imprecise short-cut to express a complex and multifarious series of structures (see Chapters 5, 6 and 8). Here I will only mention that the impersonal use of language is a conventionalised trait of scholarly writing and, albeit with inconsistencies and individual variations, of student writing. Impersonal structures tend to convey the proposition as generally acceptable (due to the circumstances) dissociating the addresser from the imposition of a statement, opinion, value-judgement, etc. (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 206; Myers, 1989).

Another strategy which is a characteristic trait of academic writing and is commonly used by the students is the modalised impersonal expressions referring to actions

which concern the writer, the reader of the script and the readers (or critics) of literature (root metadiscoursal or argumentative):

E3-34 This can be seen; E3-42-43 Other arguments [...] can be used to refute the statement; E6-21-22 one has to unearth meaning; E6-23-24 the reader has to become actively involved; E7-4 literature can be divided; E8-31 One has only to observe; E8-42 If this can be considered

I1-68-69 Si possono prendere in considerazione 'It can be considered'; I1-85 Si possono poi citare 'It is possible then to quote'; I2-123 si può dire perciò 'therefore it is possible to say'; I3-66 a questo punto è lecito chiedersi 'at this point it is appropriate to ask oneself

These are only a few of the many examples taken from metadiscoursal and argumentative root modality. In this environment modality contributes to the negative politeness strategies reinforcing impersonalisation or, in some cases, the use of first person plural (*we*): the verbs referring to actions which involve the participants in the communicative events are generalised and the presence of the participants is backgrounded.

Tables 1 and 2 show that the English data contain a higher number of subjective occurrences. This is consistent with the findings about person markers and impersonal structures (Chapters 5 and 6) which showed that the English students tend to efface their presence less from the text.

While the use of modality generally conforms to this pattern, there are some occurrences in the tables which deviate slightly from it. As noticed both in Chapter 5 (person markers) and in Chapter 9 (metadiscoursal features), Italian students tend to use more subjective language (person markers, as they have been labelled in this study) in metadiscoursal stretches of text. There are more modalised occurrences of metadiscoursal stretches of text in Italian than in English (0.26% in Italian; 0.20% in English). The percentages are too low to be significant, but the point is that, as shown by the analysis of person markers and metadiscourse, the Italian students hesitate less in using a subjective structure when the stretch of text is

metadiscoursal. One conclusion that might be drawn is that Italian students efface their presence less when dealing with the structure of the discourse and the signalling of how the discourse is structured, but efface it more than the English students when value-judgements on the subject matter are given. In this latter case, the Italian students prefer to report unmodalised statements from authoritative sources.

Epistemic modality is prototypically subjective and therefore it expresses the addresser's commitment to the propositional content of an utterance. It is also a core-strategy in politeness (mainly negative politeness) and it is strongly influenced by the type of discoursal relationship which exists between the participants. The tables of English and Italian epistemic modals show that the overwhelming number of epistemic occurrences are impersonal. However it is remarkable that epistemic modals expressing uncertainty have a higher number of person deixis than the other types. In English 6 are in a first person plural environment and 18 in a first person singular environment; in Italian 1 is a first person plural and 10 are first person singular.

E12-7 I would be inclined to state that [...]

E16-1 I believe that [...]

E11-18 we may feel immediately inclined to judge [...]

I6-81 direi che 'I would say that'

I6-117 a mio avviso 'in my opinion'

I12-45 credo che 'I think that'

The number of occurrences of first person singular expressing uncertainty is rather high if compared to the total number of first person plural occurrences. It seems as if expressing uncertainty is conventionally acceptable in the first person singular because the addresser openly acknowledges the tentativeness of her statement.

A last point to make about the cline subjective/objective is that in Italian there is a higher frequency of totally objective modals. As mentioned in the previous sections,

modals have been considered objectively used when they are reported by the addresser from another source. In Italian this is the case for 59 occurrences and in English for 26. These figures are consistent with the number of 'attributors' found in the data. Attributors, analysed in Chapter 10, are voices outside the text which are mentioned by the student as authorities in the literary field (usually they are literary critics). The Italian data have many more attributors than the English data (Section 10.3.2.). The Italian students seem more motivated than the English students to show that an authoritative source is at the origin of what they are writing. This device can have different outcomes: first of all it implicitly distances the presence of the addresser from her own script, this reduces the weight of imposition of the addresser on the addressee. Secondly, it gives implicit value to the type of argument the student has chosen, while not specifying the commitment to the propositional content the student has, and so the responsibility of the student is reduced.

7.7.3. Apparent inconsistencies in the use of modals

There are uses of modality in the data which are rather counterintuitive. This section will only mention some instances.

In some cases the proposition is heavily modalised, but the global effect is somewhat contradictory. In the following example, the student has decided for a trenchant value-judgement and expresses it in such a straightforward way that the modalisation used is certainly not enough to redress the imposition on the reader. In this case, there seems to be a mismatch between the conventionalised use of modality and the actual word choice made by the student:

E12-6-10 Chaucer is not a more primitive writer than Joyce, though I would be inclined to state that Wordsworth is, & simply because his theories are so badly hammyly stated in comparison with his poetry < sic >

What has been noticed during the data analysis is a wider range of individual variations among the English students in the use of modality in comparison with the Italian students. There are English scripts in which very few modals are used, whereas in others there are clusters of modal expressions. The following occurrences are taken from a script in which modals are frequently used (both epistemic and root modals are underlined):

E14-9-12 Literature that does not have evident designs on its readers may for example be seen in the novels of Jane Austen. The world which she writes about may appear to be for the purpose of entertainment.

E14-52-57 For example George Orwell's Animal Farm, a political allegory for his view of the Russian Revolution, could be seen as effective both for its political message which the reader may agree or disagree with but also for its allegorical novel which could be compared with other works such as [...]

This individual variation is in keeping with the individual differences noticed among English student writers in the use of first person markers and evaluation strategies (Chapters 5 and 8) and it could be related to the more direct relation to the subject matter that the English students seem to have (see Chapter 12).

Additionally, there does not seem to be a clear pattern in the use of modality, especially epistemic modality, as will be mentioned in Chapter 8: there are heavily modalised occurrences in which the propositional content is not very controversial, whereas bald-on-record assertions carry a controversial content and therefore impose on the reader an opinion which, in politeness terms, is a weighty face-threatening act. This phenomenon is not easy to explain. What can be said is that there seems to be a diversified perception of the weight of imposition among student writers, and there is more individual variation among the English students than among the Italian students (for an interpretation see Section 12.4.).

As was mentioned in Section 6.3.4., however, Simpson (1990) analysed the use of modality in Leavis's prose and noticed that weight of imposition and politeness

strategies to redress it are not always consistently used: there are apparently idiosyncratic variations that are part of Leavis's style.

Even in scholarly writing, therefore, there are apparent inconsistencies. In student writers, this is usually caused both by individual idiosyncrasies, but also by the uneven and developmental quality of their writing.

7.8. Concluding remarks

Summarising the analysis of the data, some points can be made for both the Italian and the English data.

1. Both root and epistemic modality convey, in different degrees, politeness strategies to redress the weight of the imposition on the reader. This is particularly so when modality is expressed impersonally (subjective / objective): the addresser distances herself from the imposition on the addressee and sometimes presents the imposition as a general remark (Brown & Levinson, 1987).
2. Epistemic modality has two main components: the addresser's attitude to the content of the proposition and the addresser's attitude towards the addressee in the context of the communicative event. The two levels can only rarely be distinguished.
3. Epistemic modality is a core strategy in negative politeness because it conveys the illocutionary force of the proposition with different degrees of certainty. This strategy tends to minimise the imposition on the addressee, gives deference, hedges the assertion and it can express a subjective value-judgement impersonally (Brown & Levinson, 1987).
4. Root modality has been analysed in its components of discoursal modality: metadiscoursal and argumentative. These two subcategories have been chosen for the relevance they have in establishing an overt relation between the addresser, the addressee and the text itself.

5. The strategies mentioned above (both root and epistemic modality) belong to conventionalised features of academic writing. The students, however, do not always use them in a consistent way in their writing.

The following points are a summary of the comparisons established between the two sets of data.

1. The English data have a higher occurrence of modals than the Italian data. This may be due to the differences between the two languages, but partly it is also due to politeness factors: the English students express their own value-judgement more openly than the Italian students and they redress this imposition on the addressee more often.
2. Italian students tend to report what they have studied and the opinions of the critics, therefore they tend to use categorical statements more often than the English students. The weight of imposition of a categorical statement is justified by the authority of the literary source it derives from.
3. Clusters, which have the effect of emphasising modality, were rather rare (4 in English data and 1 in the Italian data).
4. Both root and epistemic modality are mainly expressed impersonally in the two sets of data, following the conventions of academic writing. However, metadiscoursal root modality is personalised both in English and in Italian. This phenomenon is all the more remarkable in Italian where the frequency of modalised metadiscoursal occurrences is slightly higher than in English. It has been hypothesised that Italian students efface their presence in the scripts less when the stretch of text is metadiscoursal, that is when the stretch of text refers to the way in which the information is structured and there is no overt reference to the propositional content.
5. Epistemic modality conveying uncertainty has a high frequency of occurrence in the first person singular in both languages. This may be due to the fact that

expressing uncertainty is a strategy of negative politeness which balances out the direct commitment of the first person singular.

6. There is more individual variation in the use of modals in the English than in the Italian scripts.

The following chapter will contribute to clarifying some issues related with modality and partly overlapping with it: evaluation strategies and the redressive devices accompanying them.

CHAPTER 8

EVALUATION STRATEGIES

8.1. The concept of attitude

Evaluation strategies is the general label given in this study to structures which convey the comment of the addresser on the ideational content of the proposition. These strategies represent a link between the ideational and the interpersonal metafunctions because they reveal the attitude of the addresser towards the propositional content and their configuration is influenced by the relationship between the participants in the communicative event.

In general terms these strategies can be related to what Searle calls the attitude of the addresser towards the propositional content (Searle, 1969). As Bertuccelli Papi (1989) remarks, it is possible to interpret Searle's theory in terms of attitudes: illocutionary force can be said to result from the interaction between the attitude of the addresser towards the propositional content and the attitude towards the addressee (*ibid.*: 336).

The issue is theoretically complex and related to the philosophical background underlying Searle's work. Here I will only mention that Bach and Harnish (1979) use a similar approach for their model of communication in which the speech act has two main parameters: the attitude towards the propositional content and the attitude towards the interlocutor.

At a pre-verbal level, Bierwisch (1980) identifies a class of cognitive attitudes that the addresser uses when processing thought and speech in order to evaluate the communicative situation s/he is in, and hypothesises the presence of an operator of attitude in the utterance.

Sperber & Wilson (1986, 1995) assume a fundamental role for attitude:

Utterances are used not only to convey thoughts but to reveal the speaker's attitude to, or relation to, the thought expressed; in other words, they express 'propositional attitudes', perform 'speech-acts', or carry 'illocutionary force'. (ibid.: 10-11)

Attitude, which can be defined only within the interaction between the addresser and the addressee, seems to be one of the fundamental aspects of communication and a wide-ranging phenomenon both from the theoretical and the practical viewpoints. Whereas the theoretical viewpoint will not be included in the present study, this chapter will investigate some of the linguistic realisations of attitude.

As Blakemore (1992) remarks when analysing the indicators of attitude, the linguistic form of the utterance may or may not explicitly convey the fact that the addresser wants to express an attitude (ibid.: 61). In the sections that follow, the analysis will focus on some linguistic devices which accompany expressions of attitude towards the propositional content. From now on the generic term 'attitude' will be replaced with some of its textual realisations: evaluations of propositional content or value-judgements and claims. More specifically, the task given to the students in the type of communicative event we are considering is a request for an evaluation of the proposition contained in the examination task or in the quotation they are invited to discuss. The evaluative strategies have to be constructed within the conventions of argumentative writing and in examination conditions.

The student writer expresses her viewpoint on the topic given in the examination task, she has to make discursal choices within the argumentative framework and evaluate the propositional content of what she chooses to include. The difficulty lies in the fact that she operates, or tries to operate, within the conventions of the

academic community and the ostensible addressee is part of this community. Additionally, most of the propositional content she uses derives from the community (literary criticism, lecturer's notes, lectures, seminars). In this communicative situation the overt expression of value-judgements becomes a balancing act of contrasting tendencies: the task obliges the student to construct an argument and therefore express attitudes or (more precisely in this context) evaluations and claims, but the addresser does not share the authority of the addressee and the literary and critical sources she uses in her work. Her work has to show a critical attitude towards the propositional content and at the same time deference to the community which produced the sources and to which the ostensible addressee belongs. In this communicative situation, opinions and value-judgements might be perceived as face-threatening acts imposed on the reader and might need to be redressed.

In this chapter I will qualitatively analyse some of the strategies used by student writers to express their viewpoint about the given topic and I will relate these devices to politeness theory; a comparison will be made between the Italian and the English data. The hypothesis is that the Italian students tend to show more deference to the authority of the academic community and its writing: the act of evaluating or making claims is deemed to be higher-ranking as an imposition on the addressee if compared to the English data; therefore the face-threatening act in Italian is hypothesised to be either avoided altogether or heavily redressed when expressed.

In the following section, I will summarise some of the tenets of Brown and Levinson's theory, explain why their model has been chosen and see how it can apply to my data.

8.2. Politeness Theory

There are several current approaches to politeness, some of the best known studies in the field being Lakoff (1973), Leech (1983), Brown and Levinson (1978, 1987) and Fraser (1990). The approach I will refer to in this study is Brown and Levinson's because it is a fairly articulated and wide-ranging instrument for analysing directness and tentativeness cross-culturally and cross-linguistically.

The core of this theory, which draws on Goffman's (1967) concepts of 'face', consists of a system in which a 'model person' has both negative and positive face, that is the want 'to be unimpeded and the want to be approved of in certain respects' (ibid.: 58). Brown and Levinson argue that an act of communication can impinge upon the addressee's face wants and therefore it has to be redressed accordingly. The seriousness of the face-threatening act depends on three main variables and the participants' evaluation of these variables: the social distance between the participants, the relative power relation between them, and the ranking of the imposition in a particular culture.

Brown and Levinson consider politeness as a universal phenomenon and their study is cross-cultural and cross-linguistic. Not all scholars, however, agree on the universal applicability of their approach: a critical appraisal of the concept of facework and its different meaning in Western and Eastern cultures can be found in Ting-Toomey & Cocroft (1994); Janney & Arndt (1993) consider Brown & Levinson's a comprehensive framework to study politeness in Western cultures, but they remark that it falls short for the analysis of interaction in other types of culture.

This controversy is only peripherally relevant for the present study since Italian and English have, in relative terms, a similar cultural heritage. There are, however, other problems which have to be mentioned: as Brown and Levinson themselves

admit in the introductory chapter added to the second edition of their book (1987), there are aspects of the speaker/hearer relationship which have not been taken into account in their model. One such aspect which is relevant to the present study is the presence of third parties who do not directly contribute to the interaction, but condition it simply by their presence. Another is the fact that their data are exclusively spoken and, as they point out in the 1987 introduction, rather uneven because they are of different kinds (natural, elicited and intuitive). Thomas (1995) also remarks that Brown & Levinson do not mention that some utterances can be potentially threatening both for the face of the addresser and the addressee at the same time. It is possible to say, therefore, that their study tends to simplify the complexity of real communication.

The complexity of the addresser/addressee patterns is particularly evident in written language in which there is normally a delay between the writing and the reading events; writing is prototypically less ephemeral than speaking and can be read over and over again by several different people. In some text-types the concepts of writer and reader are the fuzzier and more controversial ones of author and audience (see Sections 3.4.4.1. and 3.4.4.2.).

Although Brown and Levinson investigate only spoken interaction and although more research is needed to test the validity of its components (as the researchers themselves admit in the introduction, 1987: 1-54), this model of politeness can be adopted for written data as well, as Myers (1989) advocates. Myers examines the politeness strategies of scientific papers published in established journals and his findings confirm the usefulness of Brown and Levinson's model in the analysis of written text. The model, however, has to be adapted to the specificity of a medium different from the spoken one. In this respect, two main points have to be taken into

account: the relationship between participants and the type of face-threatening acts which are likely to be redressed (or avoided).

The application of the theory to written data is largely unexplored and untested, but it is appealing and full of potential. Examining negative politeness (more frequent than positive politeness in scientific academic prose), Myers argues:

most of the features that are considered just conventional in scientific texts - hedging, impersonal constructions, the assertions of general rules - can be reinterpreted as negative politeness devices. (Myers, 1989: 12)

Devices, that is, which are used by the writer to recognise the right of the reader not to be imposed upon. Myers, therefore, attempts a pragmatic interpretation of devices which are traditionally encoded in certain genres and considered the standard norm.

In the type of writing I am analysing, making a claim, expressing an evaluation and an opinion can be considered face-threatening acts which need to be redressed. In fact, there is a tension between two tendencies inherent in the communicative event: the student's task is both to show her knowledge of the subject matter and to demonstrate her competence in constructing a critical argument concerning it. In other words the former task is closer to what Scardamalia & Bereiter (1987) call knowledge-telling and the latter closer to knowledge-transforming (referring to the process, not the product). In examination conditions, however, it is hardly possible for the students to produce a text which can be authentic knowledge transforming, as O'Brien (1992) points out: the two different tendencies can be described as respectively more and less dependent on the source of authority (the academic community, literary critics, literary authors). It follows that the more independent the student is in her claims and in her way of constructing the argumentation, the more face-threatening the utterance or text may become. At the same time, different cultural contexts tend to allow different degrees of critical independence in text-

types, so a personal claim or opinion can be higher or lower-ranking according to the cultural context and the type of communicative event (Hall, 1976; Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey, 1988; Hinds, 1987; Ting-Toomey, 1994). This point will be further discussed in the interpretation of the data analysis.

In order to understand the type of imposition involved in the speech acts of making claims or expressing evaluation, one has to relate them to the three variables mentioned above: social distance, relative power, ranking of imposition. Establishing the characteristics of author and audience in student writing is a complex task (see Sections 3.4.4.1. and 3.4.4.2.) and I will here simplify the issue, focusing only on the main participants in the communicative event and their social and discourse roles: the student / candidate is the writer and the lecturer / examiner is the reader. In the specific communicative situation examined in this study, they are quite distant in social terms since the lecturers are fully-fledged members of the academic community, whereas the students are only aspiring members. The power relation is asymmetric since the participants are engaged in a gatekeeping encounter. Whereas students and lecturers might maintain informal relationships during the term, an official examination creates distance between the two sets of participants. The students are also expected to share some of the conventions and norms of the academic community; this means that they have the right (and they are expected) to use strategies belonging to the more powerful addressee (Bartholomae, 1985; Caffi, 1991). The situation outlined here is complicated by the fact that variables vary cross-culturally for the same text-type: I will deal with the cross-cultural issue when discussing and comparing the English and Italian data. A last general remark concerns the type of task the students have to engage in. In the student writing I analysed, the student may agree or disagree with the proposition given in the task specification. These two responses require her to adopt different evaluation strategies and different degrees of politeness, since disagreement is usually more

face-threatening than agreement and a higher-ranking imposition. Additionally, as mentioned above, a more independent and critical viewpoint on the part of the student would imply a higher-ranking imposition because it would infringe the consensus between addresser and addressee and it would expose the addresser to criticism on the part of the addressee: the addresser adopts the conventions of the addressee and yet declares her independence from his/her viewpoint. The imposition is heavier in so far as the addressee also represents the source of authority, the academic community and literary critical establishment.

Brown and Levinson identify 5 possible linguistic strategies which can be used by the addresser in different circumstances:

1. avoiding the face-threatening act altogether;
2. doing the face-threatening act off record so that the intention of the addresser is only ambiguously put forward;
3. doing the face-threatening act on record redressing it with negative politeness (deference politeness);
4. doing the face-threatening act redressing it with positive politeness (solidarity politeness);
5. going bald-on record.

The first strategy cannot be clearly identified in my data since, if it was used, there is no written record of it in the scripts (the only record would be crossed out sections, but these are very few and often illegible). One would expect that, given the type of communicative event, the most common strategy is negative politeness and its conventional devices in academic writing: impersonality, referring to general rules, hedging. There are, however, occurrences of other strategies.

Before reporting the analysis of the data, in the following sections I will define evaluation strategies and see how they are expressed in the student writing.

8.3. Evaluative strategies and attitude markers

Evaluative strategies consist of linguistic devices used by the addresser to express her viewpoint, make a claim and put forward an argument. As mentioned above, I labelled these devices 'evaluative' because the student writer is called on to discuss an issue about literature given in the examination task, and she becomes, therefore, both an 'observer' (more 'objective', detached, less involved in the writing) and an 'intruder' (more 'subjective', more involved) (see Halliday, 1978; Chafe, 1982, 1985; Chafe and Danielewicz, 1987; Caffi & Janney, 1994). Relative objectivity and subjectivity mingle in the scripts blurring the discourse roles of the students: the students are 'reporters' of what they have studied (lecture notes, books, articles), but also 'authors' who can express their critical viewpoint (Sections 12.3 and 12.4).

An element which further complicates the picture is the concept itself of objectivity in this context: when the student writer uses apparently 'objective' language, she positions herself (and the reader) as belonging to the community of people who recognise that particular ideational content as 'objective'. Even 'objective' language, therefore, reveals something of the relative positioning of the participants in the written text.

In their analysis of metadiscourse in scientific writing, Crismore and Farnsworth (1990) consider as one of the variables of metadiscourse what they call 'attitudinal/evaluative markers' which 'allow authors to reveal their attitudes toward the propositional content' (ibid.: 124). This category is borrowed from Vande Kopple's study of metadiscourse ('attitude markers'; Vande Kopple, 1985: 85). These markers are, for instance: *I find it interesting that, it is regrettable that, surprisingly, etc.* The status of these expressions as metadiscourse has been questioned by Mauranen (1993) and Chapter 9 will deal with this issue. In this

chapter, the concept of attitudinal phrases is borrowed and adapted to the present needs of data analysis. Both attitudinal phrases and their wider context in the discourse will be considered here, which is why the more generic label 'evaluative strategies' is adopted. There are also occurrences in the data in which no attitudinal marker is used by the writer, but an evaluation is clearly put forward and therefore taken into account in the data analysis.

Evaluative strategies are fairly wide-ranging linguistic devices, which may refer to the general subject-matter of the student's text or to a more local structure such as the propositional content of a clause. In some cases the boundaries of evaluative strategies might not be clear. Here is an example from the beginning of one of the scripts:

E3-1-5 The quotation in question is one which appears to be a very bald, generalised statement. It is almost inevitable, therefore, that one will find oneself at least partly in agreement with it and that there will be points on which disagreement is possible.

The beginning of the script is a cluster of evaluative strategies and attitude markers, but it seems to me that dividing it up into units of evaluation would be arbitrary. It is for this reason that the analysis will be only qualitative and not quantitative.

8.4. Politeness strategies

The face-threatening acts which can be found in the scripts are evaluations and value-judgements of the topic given in the examination task. These linguistic actions are, however, the core of the task. In order to construct their text, the students have to support their claim with a series of arguments which explain and justify it. The speech acts relating to claims and value-judgements may be redressed or not, according to the perception that the student has of impinging on the addressee's face.

In academic prose, the most common devices used for minimising evaluations and claims belong to negative politeness (Myers, 1989). In the scripts, however, there are also quite a few positive politeness devices, some strategies are bald-on-record and a limited number are off-record.

Before starting the discussion of the data, one last point has to be made about the two-pronged characteristic of attitude in communication. As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, attitude can refer either to the propositional content or to the addressee: the two components usually interact and interlink in the utterance even when one is more relevant than the other due to the type of communicative event. The interaction of the two aspects is at the basis of the three main variables of politeness (distance, power, ranking).

One point, however, has not yet been mentioned and can be considered a characteristic of student writing: the uncertainty about the propositional content. The point is that some expressions similar to politeness strategies might just express uncertainty about the propositional content. For instance, hedging might be both a negative politeness strategy or an expression of uncertainty more inherently propositional. Even in the latter case, the interpersonal level is not excluded altogether since lack of knowledge can be considered an infringement of face (the expectation of the addresser is flouted) and has to be somewhat redressed.

In student writing it is not always possible to distinguish between strategies conveying uncertainty about the content and strategies redressing less tentative claims and value-judgements. The student can easily exploit this ambiguity and the addressee is likely to expect it in this type of writing. In fact I suspect that in many other text-types this ambiguity is not an irrelevant part of tentative language.

The sections that follow report the discussion of the data analysis. It starts with occurrences which show no need for redress (bald on record), then proceeds with solidarity between the participants (positive politeness), and then moves on to negative (deference) politeness and off record strategies.

8.4.1. Bald on record

Bald-on-record remarks can be used for different reasons (see Brown & Levinson, 1987: 94-101); in the scripts there seem to be only two possibilities:

1. communicating with the maximum efficiency. This explanation is unlikely because even if the students have a very limited time to write, yet they can still plan their text and they are not obliged to produce it 'off the cuff'.
2. there is no need for minimising the claim or evaluation because the imposition on the reader is so small that it can be ignored. This seems to be the most plausible explanation for the instances found in the scripts.

Bald-on-record remarks are rare in the Italian scripts and, in most cases, they are stated in such a general way that they are border-line with factual statement with no redressive strategies:

17-1-6 Letterati del rifiuto furono certo gli scapigliati, rifiuto di riconoscere nel sistema di valori e di modelli che la società borghese va affermando, di abbracciare la logica del guadagno e asservirsi a un potere malato e corrotto. < sic >

The scapigliati were certainly literary figures characterised by 'refusal', the refusal to recognise the system of values and models that middle-class society is putting forward and the refusal to accept the logic of money-making and become the slaves of a corrupted power.

In instances in which the student makes a clear-cut bald-on-record claim, the claim is justified by the argumentation constructed before or after the remark:

18-124-128 Quello che è certo è che la Scapigliatura ha risentito dell'eredità romantica, non accettandone comunque passivamente tutti gli aspetti, e ha preparato la strada al movimento decadente, senza per questo essere un anticipo di decadentismo.

What is certain is that Scapigliatura was influenced by the romantic heritage, without passively accepting all its aspects, and it prepared the way to the decadent movement without being part of it.

Not only is this occurrence placed at the very end of the argumentation, but also it is preceded by negative politeness strategies (not included in the quote above: 18-121-124) which initiate the concluding remark.

One occurrence of bald-on-record evaluation is not prepared by any argumentation:

I20-24-26 Lo scapigliato esagera tutte le premesse del Romanticismo, pur condividendone l'irrazionalismo, e lo spirito antiborghese. < sic >

The scapigliato exaggerates all the premises of Romanticism, even if he shares its irrationality and its anti-middle-class spirit.

In this instance, however, the accurate justification of this remark follows in the text and the student's strategy is just the reverse of that previously discussed.

In the Italian scripts the student goes bald on record when there is no need to minimise the claim because the general context justifies it. The use of this strategy in the English scripts is less rare and more differentiated, as the second part of this section will show.

In response to task 4a (see Appendix 1), some of the English students make a direct comment on the quotation:

E1-1-10 The history of literature most certainly involves an endless shifting and changing of literary form. To see this change as a 'progress' from 'primitive' to 'sophisticated' is misguided for two reasons. First of all it makes the arrogant assumption that literature is moving in one direction towards a particular goal, that of representing the world, while the world and its values remain the same. Secondly, it ignores the fact that much of our most contemporary western literature is looking back to the oldest forms of literature for inspiration and device.

E4-7-8 Therefore to state that there is a 'progress' from primitive to sophisticated forms is wrong.

The evaluation is rather weighty (*misguided, arrogant, it ignores the fact, is wrong*). The title quotation is not acknowledged, but it could be estimated that the author is a literary writer or critic and therefore fairly authoritative and belonging to

the same community as the reader of the script. In the passages quoted above and in others, the student writers do not recognise the need to defer this authority.

There are several other instances of bald-on-record remarks. see some of the several instances in script E15 (task 4b, Appendix 1):

E15-25-26 There is no writer who can write objectively and thus all literature has a design.

E15-107-109 Good literature has always stood outside the system from which it comes and this is much of its dynamism.

E15-119-121 Design forces changes and reactions, which are the essential functions of socially effective literature.

This type of bald-on-record evaluation is accepted (if not sanctioned) by the examiner who gave a mark of 66% and wrote: 'Powerful if one-sided answer'. The student's directness is, to a certain extent, accepted by the examiner because the student's judgements are satisfactorily backed up by exemplifications and explanations.

Some bald-on-record remarks are worded in a fairly general way so that the imposition is really minimal in any case and they seem to verge towards asserting a general statement without redressive device (see above the Italian instance: I8-124-128):

E20-1-3 For a piece of literature to be socially effective it must produce a change within the reader's perception of society.

Other instances, like some given above, are much more subjectively stated and overtly reveal the attitude and the feeling of the student writer:

E22-1-2 There is nothing more irritating than literature preaching to its readers.

The structure is colloquial and the modifier *irritating* defines the mood of the writer rather than her ideas. The writer did not hesitate to start the script on a personal, impressionistic note. This colloquial tone contributes to creating solidarity rather than distance between writer and reader. There are first person occurrences in which

the verb expresses impressions and feelings (*I feel*) rather than reasoning and knowledge. The student writer, therefore, seems to position herself as a reader of literature who has to analyse it critically, but also as a reader of literature who can appreciate it without necessarily applying her critical faculties to it.

Another effect of this type of bald evaluation is that literature is not presented as a distant icon which should not be impinged upon. As it can be read and appreciated, it can also be directly judged:

E23-4-6 It is very hard to try and change or form people's opinions without appearing patronising, overbearing and single-minded.

This type of evaluation would be highly unlikely in academic prose, the imposition on the reading community of such a judgemental sentence would be too weighty. The student, however, does it without redress. Evaluating a Scottish modern play, another student remarks:

E13-103-104 The approach is effective and unsettling.

Writing about satire the same student says:

E13-81-82 Satire is an effective and clever way of making a dissatisfaction with the system felt [...]

Modifiers in both instances are precise and convey the personal attitude of the student in a direct way (*effective, unsettling, clever*). Literature, in other words, can be judged and discussed with no need for mediation. Since bald-on-record remarks are not rare in the English students' texts, one can infer that the student writer calculates that they will be acceptable to the reader.

The Italian students, on the other hand, make a bald-on-record remark only when it is contextually justified and carefully prepared for. The distance between their direct evaluation and the propositional content is bridged by the argumentation they construct and by the deference shown in other sections of the scripts, as will be shown below.

Another device which minimises distance between participants and implies solidarity rather than deference is positive politeness, the topic of the next section.

8.4.2. Positive politeness

Positive politeness is a device which establishes solidarity and tends to show that the addresser has concerns similar to those of the addressee. It is therefore less specific than negative politeness in that it does not necessarily focus on one specific face-threatening act, but it aims at diminishing the distance between addresser and addressee. The addresser, therefore, can minimise a face-threatening act by assuring the addressee that they have similar wants.

Given these characteristics, positive politeness can be a risky strategy because the addressee might not recognise and accept the addresser's right to assert common wants and solidarity, as some lecturers' corrections in the scripts show (see Appendix 2). In an asymmetric relationship, such as that between the candidate and the examiner, one would expect to find very little positive politeness. Its use is indeed very restricted in Italian, whereas in English there is a wider variety of instances and contexts in which this strategy is used.

The range of strategies in the scripts is restricted if compared with Brown and Levinson's analysis of spoken interaction: there is no scope for personal praise of the addressee, showing sympathy, offering, promising, etc. The strategies which have been found in this type of writing are:

1. asserting common ground by using pronouns of solidarity;
2. establishing solidarity by assuming shared knowledge, value-judgements and impressions;

3. presupposing knowledge of addressee's reactions and establishing a fictional dialogue with him/her;
4. switching point of view to bridge the distance between addresser and addressee.

These positive politeness effects are usually created by a number of linguistic devices, as shown below. Additionally, these strategies can overlap or mix with other politeness strategies. The overall picture is therefore quite complex. Here I will examine stretches of text in which a positive politeness effect is the dominant one.

In the scripts the use of person markers can signal both positive and negative politeness. Person markers have been discussed in Chapter 5 at length, here I will only make some general remarks about the first person plural *we*. The pluralisation of the pronoun can be considered a negative politeness device to avoid the first person singular and to generalise the issue (authorial exclusive *we*, for instance; references to the wider community of readers rather than to the addresser, etc.; see Section 8.4.3.), but in some instances the first person plural becomes a positive politeness device since it presents the student writer's evaluations and impressions as shared by the community of readers and, consequently, by the addressee as well. In this case the first person plural is usually found together with other strategies which contribute to positive politeness. In the following example, points 1 and 2 above merge and build up an effect of shared feelings between the writer and the community of theatre-goers (to which, presumably, the reader belongs):

E1-44-47 Euripides' Medea, for example, concentrates much more on individual motives and feelings than earlier Greek drama - we cannot help but sympathise with the woman who murders her children.

The final comment appeals to what the writer presents as common feelings and impressions of theatre-goers to the play. A similar case refers to the common feelings evoked by a novel, the student's impressions become the impressions shared by all readers:

E17-86-89 Eustace, on the other hand, is a wonderfully evoked character for whom we do care very much: as he yearns so do we. Thus the social effectiveness of the novel is enormous.

The pronouns, the emphatics (*do*) and the hyperbolic adverbs and modifiers (*wonderfully, enormous*), verbs (*care*) establish the impression of common emotional response. Positive politeness, therefore, is here achieved through a cluster of linguistic devices.

In Italian there are some instances of first person marker (often a verb inflection, since Italian is a pro-drop language) which has a positive politeness effect, but they are mostly concentrated in one script (I9); this would lead to the conclusion that it is an idiosyncratic use by this particular student. Additionally, the lecturer underlined as not acceptable the first instance (reported below) which occurs at the beginning of the script. There are no grammar errors, therefore the problem must be in the level of formality:

I19-1-4 La Scapigliatura, per certi aspetti, può essere considerata una continuazione del Romanticismo, ma ci presenta anche numerosi temi che caratterizzano il Decadentismo.

Scapigliatura, in some respects, can be considered a continuation of Romanticism, but it also presents us several themes which characterise Decadentism.

In this case, the only strategy which asserts common ground is accompanied by a series of negative politeness devices (*per certi aspetti, può essere considerata*).

Looking at the 4 other instances of person pronouns used in this way in the script, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the student used this device in an attempt to impersonalise the expression, whereas she obtained the effect of asserting common ground. Another student incurs a similar problem and is corrected by the lecturer:

I13-43-46 Certo, l'esempio più visibile lo si era avuto in Francia dove, come ci aveva fatto notare il buon Lukàcs, si era generata la scissione tra terzo e quarto stato.

Certainly, the most visible example had happened in France where, as good old Lukàcs pointed out to us, the division between third and fourth estate took place.

In this case, the adjective in front of the name of the critic enhances the assertion of common ground and solidarity in a way that the lecturer finds unacceptable.

Another student establishes solidarity by openly assuming shared knowledge using a parenthetical clause which is border-line between positive and negative politeness because it can be also interpreted as a hedge:

I18-69-71 [...] si assiste alla battaglia tra la borghesia e il proletariato che terminerà, come sappiamo, con la vittoria borghese.

[...] there is the struggle between middle-class and proletarians which will end, as we know, with the victory of the bourgeoisie.

Open praise expressed as shared by all readers is not rare in the English scripts but it never occurs in the Italian scripts. In the following example the student is writing about Dickens:

E16-65-69 His works are entertaining and we let him criticise our schools, workplaces, manners, etc... because we are enjoying the story. His novels are hard to put down and engage the reader - whether he or she like < sic > it or not.

The pronoun *we*, inclusive of the writer, sounds odd since Dickens was mainly criticising 19th century institutions; the student, however, does not realise the inconsistency and she seems to encompass all readers (past and present). The dominant lexical field of the comment creates the effect of personal appreciation rather than literary criticism: *entertaining, enjoying, hard to put down, engage, like*. Due to the personalised quality of the comment, the pronoun *we* does not create an effect of negative politeness (impersonalisation, distancing from the deictic centre of the writer), but the opposite effect of shared feelings and impressions.

In other instances the student writer identifies her value-judgement with everybody's in the community of readers of literature. In the following example, for instance, the experiencer subject of the verb *to see*, *we*, includes a vague number of people and generalises the writer's evaluation:

E7-12-14 If we see this on a small level in the works of the individual writer it is even more obvious throughout the history of literature.

In some cases the student writer refers to a common experience that all human beings share:

E17-34-36 [...] the reader can only agree that for this character at least, and possibly for all of us, youth is the best period of our lives.

Positive politeness here merges with negative politeness (the parenthetical hedge) in one of the various clusters of strategies which can be found in the scripts. Another fairly emotional value-judgement is the following:

E17-55-58 To take Animal Farm as an example: the social effectiveness of the parallels drawn by Orwell between a coup on the farmyard and communist rule in the Soviet Union is enormous. The images live with us.

Emotional responses presented as common reactions of the audience constitute a frequent device for the students in the English texts. This can be related to what has already been said about bald-on-record remarks and the use of pronouns: the student writers do not seem to hesitate to give an impressionistic and personal comment.

A strategy which goes a step further in solidarity is the use of free (in)direct speech in one of the English scripts: the student imagines the comments of the audience after the performance of one of Ibsen's plays:

E22-36-38 [...] all come out [of the theatre] agreeing with Ibsen about the loss of individualism and how terrible it is that whole communities can now be corrupted into thinking in one particular way!

In this case the student becomes a sort of fictional mouthpiece for the community of theatre-goers and the reader is put in such a position as to 'hear' the comments of the community.

The dialogical quality of some scripts can be exemplified by other instances in which the student establishes a fictional dialogue with the addressee. In the following example the writer, commenting on Swift's Modest Proposal anticipates a possible objection by the reader by asking:

E16-56 Am I being too negative here?

The writer seems to know that there can be a possible objection and asks a question which is neither rhetorical nor metadiscoursal, but apparently dialogical (see Section

10.2.1.). A fictional dialogue with the addressee is established in the Italian scripts: the student writer uses a metadiscoursal device to anticipate a possible question of the addressee and introduce the next stretch of argumentation as the answer to the question:

111-119-121 Dunque il Tarchetti è romantico? No, non lo è, è tipicamente scapigliato.

So, is Tarchetti romantic? No, he is not, he is typically scapigliato.

114-20-21 Ma perché questo fenomeno si sviluppò proprio a Milano?

Milano era allora, dal punto di vista economico e sociale, la città più progredita d'Italia [...]

Then why did this phenomenon develop precisely in Milan?

Milan was at that time, from the economic and social viewpoint, the most advanced city in Italy [...]

The extreme (and excessive) point to which positive politeness is taken in the English scripts can be found in the use of the 'vivid present', as Brown and Levinson label it. This device, rare and surprising in this type of writing, falls into the fourth category listed above; it is a change of viewpoint which allows the writer to present a situation as if writer and reader were there: the effect is an increase in involvement and empathy:

E18-47-52 When she finally finds a man with whom she is happy, Angel Clare, we are happy. And when he eventually discards her because he finds out about her past, making her all of a sudden a different woman, we feel sorry for her. Why can't Tess find some happiness in the world?

Plots of fictional works are normally reported in the present tense, but, in this case the present tense is used not only to narrate the events of the novel but also to chart the reader's ongoing emotional response to the events as they occur. The resulting positive politeness effect is rather typical of colloquial language. Such an extent of personal involvement and heightened emotional response shared with the reader can be found only in this script and may be considered idiosyncratic to this student. Nevertheless there are other scripts in which the emotional reaction of the student is vividly described and presented as shared by the community of readers. The following instance was quoted earlier in discussing the generic pronoun *one* (Section

6.2.1.). I mention it again here because it ties in with the previous example: the student reports her own impressions using the 'vivid present' but impersonalises them with the generic *one* and hedges them. The last two strategies belong to negative politeness, the result is therefore a cluster of mixed strategies which, in this case, are not well balanced. The present tense (with a 'generic/habitual' value) and the pronoun *one* generalise the particular reading experience of the student and render them the reader's reactions to the novel she has chosen as example:

E24-45-48 [...] one's own reaction is strong enough to mirror that of the protagonist and one, as it were, actually finds oneself strangling the ward sister WITH the protagonist.

If the present is replaced by the past and the indefinite *one* by the first person, the result is the report of the student's own reading experience.

As remarked above, the passage from one type of politeness strategy to another and the mingling of devices is common in the scripts. In some cases the result is effective or acceptable, in others (such as the two previous examples) the outcome is not well balanced since the student mixes academic writing strategies and a type of involvement which is more typical of colloquial language. In natural stretches of text, such as the scripts I am analysing, politeness devices are mixed together in clusters of alternating devices. Brown & Levinson only briefly mention 'the delicacy of the interactional balance' given by strategy mixtures or even 'hybrid' strategies. In natural data this seems to be a crucial element in the use of politeness and, in some instances, it is not easy to determine the dominant strategy. The 'social accelerator' and the 'social brake', as Brown and Levinson define positive and negative politeness respectively, are used together with other devices to create a fine interactional balance. When the student is not able to control the variables in the interaction, the result is quite uneven or idiosyncratic.

The uneven, developmental quality of student writing can be more clearly seen when looking at bald-on-record and positive politeness strategies because these enhance solidarity. As mentioned before, solidarity is risky, since it implies common face wants and a reduction of distance between the participants. Myers (1989) affirms that negative politeness is the pervasive strategy in academic writing for a number of reasons which will be examined in the next section. It is quite interesting to see that whereas negative politeness is very common in both the Italian and the English scripts, positive politeness is frequently used in a variety of ways mainly in the English scripts. In some instances, these occurrences are closer to colloquial language than to academic writing.

As a last remark, it is possible to say that the amount of positive politeness in the scripts is not evenly distributed. In Italian positive politeness is hardly ever used and twice it is corrected by the lecturer as inappropriate. In the English texts there are clear individual differences among the students because positive politeness is a riskier and a less common strategy in argumentative writing. It also seems that the variables which determine the choice of politeness strategies (social distance, relative power, ranking of imposition) are perceived differently by different students and the English students adopt a more personalised, less homogeneous set of attitudes towards these variables compared to the Italian students.

8.4.3. Negative politeness

Negative politeness minimises specific impositions to the negative face of the addressee and is more focused than positive politeness. Its effects are distance and deference and therefore it is commonly used for weighty impositions or/and in interactions where the participants have a great social distance and asymmetrical power relations. As already mentioned, Myers (1989) argues that negative politeness is so common in scientific prose that it is conventionalised in devices

usually considered typical features of academic writing: impersonalisation, references to general rules, hedging. In the scripts, negative politeness strategies are often used together with other strategies, but this section examines stretches of text in which negative politeness has a dominant effect.

Negative politeness is common both in English and in Italian. One of the most frequent devices is impersonalisation which distances the writer from her value-judgement, assertion, opinion, etc. The use of indefinite *one*, the agentless passive, *si* constructions and personal pronouns are all devices which can contribute to negative politeness, but it is rather the linguistic environment which determines the overall effect. The first person pronoun *we/noi*, mentioned in the previous section as contributing to positive politeness, is also a frequent device in negative politeness when it points towards deference and distance. Exclusive authorial *we* (Section 5.4.5), distances the speech act from the person of the writer and, consequently, the writer from the imposition on the reader:

I19-81-83 Dobbiamo comunque dire che essi non riescono e raggiungere lo stesso 'maledettismo' del poeta francese.

We have to say, anyway, that they do not reach the same level of 'accursedness' as the French poet.

E17-20-21 In seeking to debate this statement we must define what we mean by 'socially effective literature'.

Metadiscoursal remarks (as the occurrences in the examples) represent textual landmarks that the writer uses to direct the reading process and this means that metadiscourse is directly related to the writer's discoursal choices; by depersonalising the remark, the writer attempts to eliminate her presence in the text and to redress the discoursal imposition on the reader. In the Italian scripts this is by far the most frequent occurrence of politeness strategies: as will be clearer in the following pages, the most common imposition of the Italian addresser is related to her own discoursal choice, rather than to the attitudes towards the propositional

content. The following example contains inclusive authorial *noi* occurrences which apparently distance the discursal choice from the deictic centre of the addresser by involving the addressee in the speech acts:

111-20-22 Tralasciamo qui il tema del double e passiamo ad analizzare il secondo aspetto, che è quello che ci riguarda più direttamente [...]

Let us abandon [We abandon] here the theme of the double and let us analyse [we analyse] the second aspect which is the most directly relevant for us [...]

The writer may also be eliminated altogether from the picture: the metadiscursal choice becomes an intrinsic quality of the essay. These remarks are often impersonalised by using agentless passive in English and *si* constructions in Italian and they are frequently modalised in both languages:

11-85-86 Si possono poi citare le poesie di critica nei confronti della religione [...]
One can also quote the poems which criticise religion [...]

E3-42-44 Other arguments may be drawn from these three plays, however, which can be used to refute the statement in the question.

E13-23 It may be argued that [...]

The root modality (*can*, *may* and *potere*) is used impersonally, but in actual fact, it involves 'self-permission': the writer wants to show that she is daring and permitting herself to do something risky. These types of expression are conventional features of academic writing and the students adopt them in their scripts.

Impersonalisation of value-judgements about the propositional content is a frequent device. In the Italian data, it is found when the student evaluates the propositional content because the argumentation which precedes can justify this imposition on the addressee. This is the case, for instance, of the following impersonal and modalised concluding remarks in the scripts:

118-177 Concludendo, si può osservare che [...]
In conclusion, it may be observed that [...]

113-193 La Scapigliatura può essere vista come un pre-Decadentismo in fase embrionale [...]

Scapigliatura can be seen as pre-decadentism in an embryo-like phase [...]

Impersonalisation of opinions is frequent in the English scripts and achieved with different linguistic devices:

E3-14-15 It is possible to consider this a primitive form [...]

E3-40-41 In this way it may seem that tragedy has become more sophisticated in form.

In these examples, impersonalisation is used together with hedging, another frequent device (*it is possible, it may seem*).

Hedging is 'a particle, word, or phrase that modifies the degree of membership of a predicate or noun phrase in a set' (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 145). The phenomenon of hedging has been studied and categorised by linguists in different ways for different purposes (Prince *et al.*, 1982; Holmes, 1983, 1984, 1988; Chafe, 1986; Stubbs, 1986; Skelton, 1988; Caffi, 1990; Salager-Meyer, 1994). The present study will only focus on hedging as a politeness strategy and adopt Brown & Levinson's viewpoint that to hedge assumptions is to avoid complete commitment to them and leave the addressee some leeway for disagreement. Myers (1989) remarks:

Hedging is a politeness strategy when it marks a claim, or any other statement, as being provisional, pending acceptance in the literature, acceptance by the community - in other words, acceptance by the readers. (ibid.: 12)

In the case of the students' texts, both a degree of uncertainty and the necessity of seeking acceptance are very common: the attitude towards the propositional content and towards the addressee merge into hedging in such a way that it is hardly possible to distinguish the two levels. Additionally, the uncertainty about the propositional content can be influenced by the awareness that the addressee is an expert in the field and may adopt a critical viewpoint. In this communicative situation determining which hedging is more ideational and which is more interpersonal is neither viable nor useful.

Hedging is pervasive in the English texts and fairly common in the Italian texts. It appears in various different linguistic forms and can be found in clusters especially in the English scripts. The linguistic realisations of hedging are varied both in Italian and in English: modal expressions, conditionals, parenthetical phrases, adverbs, etc.

I10-87-88 In essi c'era una sorta di rapporto amore/odio nei confronti del Manzoni [...]

In them there was a sort of love/hatred relation towards Manzoni [...]

I13-134-135 Fra tutti, forse, Tarchetti è il portavoce della verità [...]

Among them all, maybe, Tarchetti is the mouthpiece of truth [...]

E7-42-44 Perhaps the step on from this may not be more sophisticated but is certainly another aspect of linguistic experimentation.

E9-30-32 Where it may be possible to trace progress from 'primitive to more sophisticated forms' is within a genre or strand of literature.

One occurrence of hedging in Italian was not accepted by the examiner because it was too colloquial and the whole sentence was underlined as unacceptable:

I13-175-178 Un posticino nell'album dei ricordi lo merita anche Dossi, ottimo sperimentista la cui lingua risulta un impasto di dialettalismo e classicismo.

Dossi as well deserves a little place in the memory book: he was an excellent experimental writer whose language is a mixture of dialectal expressions and classicism.

The left dislocation, the metaphor and the hedged *un posticino* are too colloquial a combination for the examiner to accept.

Passages in which clusters of hedges appear are rather more common in the English than in the Italian texts: in the following sentence the student accumulates *perhaps*, *for example*, *could be seen*.

E14-37-40 Works such as these perhaps do not have evident designs on the reader in for example a political way but a moral undertone could be seen as a guide to the reader.

Other clusters present various types of negative politeness mixed together:

E15-27-30 This design, however, may not be an evident design, according to the question. In order to back up this statement we must examine the meaning of 'evident'. This would appear to be a social term.

I6-74-78 Non si può negare che nella poesia del Praga, e soprattutto nella poesia del Tarchetti, non si trovino, a volte, delle immagini e delle tematiche che ci ricordino il Pascoli o il D'Annunzio [...]

One cannot deny that in the poetry of Praga and, above all in the poetry of Tarchetti, one can find, sometimes, images and themes that remind us of Pascoli or D'Annunzio [...]

Impersonalisation, hedging, understatement, litotes are all clustered together in one sentence in both examples. Contrary to what one would expect, clusters of strategies are not necessarily used for weightier impositions and the Italian cluster above is an example in point. In some cases they might signal uncertainty on the part of the addresser, but this can only be hypothesised.

In the scripts there is a recurrent type of hedge which I will call 'personalising hedge'; it is used by the writer to limit the scope of the value-judgement (opinion, impression, etc) and specify that its validity is restricted because it is personal. The device seems to contradict the tendency to impersonalisation I mentioned before and foreground the personal quality of the remark. Personalising hedges occur both in English and in Italian, but they are more common in English because the frequency of first person singular pronoun is much higher in the English scripts (see Section 5.3.). Several Italian personalising hedges occur in the concluding remarks to the scripts:

I1-139 Concludendo, mi pare non si possa parlare di [...]

In conclusion, it seems to me one cannot speak of [...]

I6-115-117 Tenendo conto di tutto ciò, considerare il movimento scapigliato come epigono del romanticismo sarebbe, a mio avviso, limitativo [...]

Taking all this into account, considering the scapigliato movement as a follower of Romanticism would be, according to me, limited [...] (conclusion)

E3-79-81 [...] but I feel that this merely heightens the audience's reaction to the emotion presented.

E4-58-61 I would just like to reiterate the point I made at the beginning when I suggested that literature, good literature, is always valid no matter what period or style it is written in.

E14-17-20 However I feel that beneath the level of the narrative her works could be socially effective in their portrayal of character which could be viewed as a moral purpose of the author.

E23-42 I think in some respects, the quote is wrong [...]

In some of the instances in English the personalising hedge does not report a viewpoint, but an impression (*I feel*); this is consistent with other occurrences reporting personal impressions and feelings (Section 5.3.). This never occurs in the Italian scripts.

An interesting occurrence in English of a hedge which can be called a hybrid between a personalising hedge and an attempt at avoiding personalisation is the following:

E17-81-82 But because, to this reader at least, Laurie Lee's writing is cloying, the social effectiveness of the book is limited.

The imposition is weighty due to the choice of modifiers (*cloying, limited*), therefore the student hedges it by limiting its scope and presenting it as a personal, not an absolute judgement. At the same time, she wants to avoid the first person singular and refers to herself as *this reader*, distancing the reference using a third person, but specifying it by means of a deictic adjective. This occurrence is an overt instance of the tension between conflicting tendencies in this type of writing: personalisation and impersonalisation; impressionistic, personal appreciation of literature and the attempt to express a knowledgeable literary criticism.

Another strategy conveying negative politeness is the assertion of general rules in order to dissociate oneself from the infringement. This strategy is opposite to personalisation because the writer seems to report a value-judgement rather than express it. Generalisation merges with off record remarks or statements in which the value-judgement is expressed in such a way that it is not possible to determine whether the writer shares it or just reports it. The following example is a generalisation shared by the writer because of the first person plural pronoun:

E17-25-28 Now, when we talk of 'propaganda' we tend to think primarily of political propaganda. [...] But this is by no means the only sort of propaganda.

The following instances generalise the impression of the writer by applying it to other people or readers:

E7-64-66 People have realised [that language] is the tool of literature and must therefore be refined and adapted in order to encourage innovation.

E1-39-41 Many readers, accustomed to the 'sophistication' of the Victorian realist novel, find such formal complexity irritating.

In the last example, the generalisation is used to distance the value-judgement (*irritating*) from the writer and present it as more generally valid. This instance differs from positive politeness because the addresser does not overtly share the value-judgement and so does not create solidarity but distance.

In the Italian scripts the assertion of general rules merges with the pervasive lack of redressive strategy and the fact that the addresser seems to report the propositional content rather than evaluating it. There are, however, some triggers, evidentials in particular, that render the statement a general rule in the context and a redressive strategy: in the following example *è evidente* is the trigger for the redressive strategy:

II-44-49 E' evidente quindi come in una società in cui 'la civiltà è un benessere' in fondo al quale non c'è altro che il 'godimento materiale', la figura dell'intellettuale e dell'arte in generale, divenga una superfluità sociale e, come tale scompaia nella totale indifferenza.

It is obvious, therefore, that in a society where 'civilisation is a welfare' based on nothing else than 'material pleasure', the figure of the intellectual and of art in general becomes socially superfluous and, as such, disappears in total indifference.

In the following example, the student gives as a general rule (*lo è sempre*) the comment on her own task: a metadiscoursal remark becomes a generalised statement:

III-12-15 E' difficile, lo è sempre riunire più autori sotto una stessa bandiera e generalizzare, parlando di loro come di appartenenti ad una scuola letteraria, ma è ancora più difficile e improprio farlo nel caso della Scapigliatura.

It is difficult, it always is, to gather different authors under the same label and generalise, speaking of them as belonging to one literary tendency, but it is even more difficult and inappropriate to do it in the case of Scapigliatura.

Generalisations can merge with other devices mentioned above, such as impersonalisation and hedging, to form clusters of negative politeness devices or 'hybrid' clusters. When generalisation is used on its own, it tends to lose its redressive quality: the stretch of text becomes report rather than comment, viewpoint, value-judgement and therefore it does not need redress because the imposition is minimal or there is no face-threatening act for the reader or the community the reader belongs to:

E5-17 The rise of the novel also provokes debate.

In the Italian scripts this is a phenomenon particularly evident since the students tend to report the propositional content without any redressive strategy as if there were no imposition on the reader. The tendency is towards the effacement of the addresser from the text:

I3-45-46 E questi riferimenti alla situazione europea sono rilevanti anche per l'analisi di quella italiana [...]

And these references to the European situation are also relevant for the analysis of the Italian situation [...]

I3-158-163 Insomma, il grande merito degli scapigliati è stato quello d'aver capito che per dare inizio a nuove tendenze era necessario sgombrare il terreno di tutto il 'vecchio': il loro limite fu però l'incapacità di contrapporre alla tradizione un 'nuovo' altrettanto concreto.

In conclusion, the great merit of the scapigliati has been understanding that to initiate new tendencies it was necessary to eliminate all the 'old' aspects, but their limit was their inability to offer, in contrast with tradition, concrete 'new' suggestions.

In the last examples, both in Italian and in English, the phenomenon of nominalisation contributes to distancing an entity from its predicate and transforms an action or event into a noun (Hodge & Kress, 1993; Fairclough, 1989). Brown & Levinson remark that

[...] in English, degrees of negative politeness (or at least formality) run hand in hand with degrees of nouniness [...] (1987: 207).

In the examples above, *the rise of the novel*, *a vehicle for entertainment*, *the same change*, *analisi*, *inizio*, *tendenze*, etc are nominalisations which identify an actual

development, event, transformation. The students used fairly common nominalisations (not too formal or literary), nevertheless, the presence of these expressions contributes to the effect of generalising the issue and crystallising a process into a noun. Nominalisation is also a device which impersonalises, since the different roles accompanying a verbal process disappear in the transformation into a noun. In some cases, however, roles cannot be easily identified: in *the rise of the novel*, for instance, the agent which brought this change about is extremely complex and diversified; by eliminating the agent, the nominalisation seems to offer, in this case, a shortcut.

Nominalisation is a complex phenomenon which often contributes to the formality of scholarly writing. In the case of the student writing analysed here, nominalisations are frequent, but there does not seem to be a clear pattern for their use apart from the fact that they often cluster with other devices. In the examples above, they contribute to the effect of reporting, rather than commenting, even though the borderline between reporting and commenting is not always clear and the student writer can exploit this ambiguity to avoid face-threatening acts altogether, as it is often the case in the Italian scripts.

As a last remark about negative politeness and its use, in the English texts in particular the weightiness of the face-threatening act does not seem to compare across scripts. In other words, in some texts slight impositions are redressed with clusters of negative politeness and in others the student goes bald on record when she is heavily evaluating the quotation of the examination task or a literary work (see also Section 7.7.3.). These inconsistencies could be related to the developmental quality of the text-type and to the variations in the personal perception of the three variables influencing redressive strategies (social distance, relative power, ranking of imposition). The Italian scripts are far less uneven.

Summarising the findings for negative politeness, the main strategies used in the scripts are similar to those found in scientific prose by Myers (1989) (impersonalisation, personal and impersonal hedging, generalised assertions), but there are differences in use.

What seems to be noticeably different from Myer's analysis in the English texts is that personalising hedges are pervasive and give an impressionistic, personal quality to the majority of the texts; secondly, clusters of politeness strategies are not always balanced and effective. The relationship between the weightiness of the face-threatening act and the type of redress is not always clear or justified.

In the Italian scripts, the most remarkable characteristic is the attempt not to impinge at all on the face of the addressee by reporting statements rather than evaluating the propositional content. Negative politeness is very common in impersonalised metadiscoursal remarks: the student redresses her own discoursal choices imposed on the reader; in the communicative event this is a minor infringement because the student is actually obliged to perform it by the very nature of the task. Personalising hedges are present, but never expressing impressions or feelings of the students. In many cases negative politeness strategies in the Italian scripts merge with the lack of redressive strategies: whenever possible the Italian student tends to avoid altogether the face-threatening act of evaluating the propositional content.

8.4.4. Off record

Off-record strategies are indirect communicative acts in which the face-threatening remark is made by implication, not literally or overtly and therefore it has to be inferred by the reader: since the face-threatening act is not stated, it is not

redressed. This type of strategy is not very frequent in the scripts. The most common devices which trigger an off-record evaluation are rhetorical questions which, according to Brown and Levinson, break a sincerity condition on questions and violate the Gricean Quality Maxim. Quirk *et al.* (1985) argue that rhetorical questions imply a forceful statement (Section 10.2.2. will deal with the controversial status of these devices). When the student wants to express a forceful judgement without an excessive imposition on the reader, she goes off record: the statement is not overtly expressed and the addressee has to supply the implicit answer to the question. In the English scripts there are several instances of rhetorical questions used as off record strategies:

E1-28-29 But is it not the faith which the omniscient narrator of Victorian novels asks of us rather primitive in fact < sic > ?

E3-74-77 Is this not as sophisticated an achievement as the mere presentation of terror in prose writing which one could find in modern drama?

In some instances rhetorical questions become on record because the student adds some other linguistic device. The following example is an interesting cluster of strategies:

E25-25-30 And do those [poets] who do leave much unaccounted for in their work instantly become recognised as 'great'? This dubious and rather frightening thought would admit into the hierarchy of poetic genius all those whose writing defied interpretation and kept their meanings to themselves.

The off record rhetorical question contains an emphatic *do* and scare quotes which direct the reader towards the negative answer. Then the student merges positive politeness (modifiers *dubious*, *frightening*), negative politeness (modality) and off record irony (*poetic genius*).

Rhetorical questions are also an interactive device which establishes a sort of fictional and conventionalised dialogue between writer and reader. In the English texts this quality of rhetorical questions seems to tie in with other seemingly dialogical devices used by the students in the scripts (see positive politeness 8.4.2.).

Apart from rhetorical questions, I could only find two other off record instances. In one the student chooses to understate and violates the Quality Maxim:

E2-62-63 However I would not say that Alice Walker is without sophistication in her writing [...]

In the other instance the student is vague and violates the Manner Maxim:

E25-4-6 [...] great poetry will go on forever while scholars attempt to identify exactly what it was the poet was really trying to say.

In this last instance the imposition on the reader is quite weighty, since the implicit value-judgement directly addresses the community of scholars the reader belongs to.

It is understandable, therefore, that the student went off record.

In the case of the Italian scripts, off record strategies tend to merge either with the lack of redressive strategies and avoidance of the face-threatening act or with a vague and general use of negative politeness. The conclusion of script I9 is a case in point:

I9-128-134 E' impossibile stabilire l'appartenenza della Scapigliatura al Romanticismo o al Decadentismo; trovandosi in mezzo a questi due movimenti letterari è chiaro che i legami che questa corrente ha con entrambi sono molto intensi ma ci sono anche molti elementi originali, se non nella poetica, almeno nelle idee di fondo.

It is impossible to decide whether Scapigliatura belongs to Romanticism or Decadentism; being between these two literary movements it is clear that the links of this literary tendency with both are very strong, but there are also original elements, if not in the poetics at least in the basic ideas.

It seems to me that the Maxims of Quantity and Manner are flouted since this is the conclusion of the script and the student is making the point of the whole argumentation. The highly indirect and indecisive way in which she words her value-judgement shows that she considers the face-threatening act so high-ranking that she needs to go off record, the value-judgement is implicit, but indirectly stated and not particularly clear.

8.4.5. Some general remarks on evaluative strategies

Evaluative strategies are potential face-threatening acts because the students have to comment on and discuss a literary topic during a gatekeeping encounter in which the main addressee is part of the academic community. The student is not a fully-fledged member of this community, but she is called to use its critical tools and base her work on the community's work. In a sense, therefore, the wider audience is the academic community, but the main addressee is the examiner. The student is dealing, as an apprentice, with a prestigious subject matter (literature) and with a long tradition of literary criticism. The student has to construct her argumentation about an examination task generated within the community to which the addressee belongs and comment on a topic in which the addressee is, presumably, very knowledgeable.

Given these premises, it would be expected that deference politeness would be dominant in the scripts. In fact the textual strategies are quite different in the Italian and in the English scripts: the English students seem to perceive value-judgements as lower-ranking impositions than the Italian students. The latter tend to avoid altogether the imposition of claims about the propositional content when possible (reporting rather than evaluating) or use deference politeness (negative politeness) as redressive strategies. In particular, the Italian students redress discursual impositions on the reader using impersonalised metadiscoursal remarks. Positive politeness strategies are very few and in some cases the lecturer has corrected them as inappropriate. Bald-on-record remarks are present when the structure of the argumentation reduces the ranking of its imposition on the reader: the student goes bald on record when the remark is an obvious conclusion to what she has written.

The English scripts present a wider variety of politeness strategies and a wider scope for differences between the individual students. The English students use

bald-on-record remarks (not always mitigated by the textual environment) and solidarity politeness as well as deference politeness. Their redressive strategies concern both the imposition of value-judgement on the propositional content and the imposition of discursual choices. The ranking of imposition seems to be perceived as lower than in the Italian scripts, since there are more strategies stressing solidarity and far more evaluations redressed with negative politeness.

Summarising the use of politeness in the scripts, there are some main points to consider:

1. The English scripts contain both academic writing conventions and devices which are more typical of text-types with greater personal involvement, such as prototypical spoken language (Chafe, 1982, 1985, Biber, 1988; McCarthy, 1993). The Italian scripts, on the other hand, contain both redressive strategies of academic writing (not always correctly used) and the avoidance of face-threatening acts.
2. The English scripts present a fairly wide and uneven range of strategies, and there seem to be personal differences in the use of politeness. Some scripts have more positive politeness (E7, E16, E17, E24), in others negative politeness is dominant (E8, E14, E19, E20), some have several bald-on-record strategies, others do not have any. Since the students are dealing with a similar task in a similar communicative event, the explanation of this variety might be in the difference in personal perceptions when judging the weightiness of a face-threatening act. The developmental quality of the text-type allows the students to use a variety of solutions. The Italian scripts show a greater homogeneity of strategies.
3. Clusters of strategies are quite common in English, some clusters show the same type of politeness, others are mixed but have a dominant effect, others are

'hybrids'. Clusters are not necessarily used to redress weightier impositions. Some clusters are effective, others are uneven and incongruent. In the Italian scripts clusters are present, but they are predominantly based on deferential politeness and they are not as remarkable as in English.

4. In the English scripts there is a conflicting tendency between impersonalisation (typical of academic writing) and other devices which tend to personalise evaluative remarks, such as 'personalising hedges'.

5. In the English scripts some stretches of text containing a high level of writer involvement and positive politeness can create a fictional dialogic effect between writer and reader.

6. Contrary to what Myers (1989) found in his data, positive politeness is quite common in the English scripts and has a range of linguistic realisations. Together with bald-on-record strategies, it stresses solidarity and it limits the distance between participants.

7. A series of linguistic devices (in particular some occurrences of bald-on-record remarks, positive politeness, personalising hedges) show that the English student does not always attempt to express value-judgements based on her reading and knowledge of the subject matter: personal appreciation of literature is overtly and subjectively expressed. The imposition on the reader of her personal impressions might be redressed, but it is not avoided. The Italian student rarely, if ever, attempts to express solidarity with the addressee, the topic (literature) is considered with deference and the student avoids being personal or impressionistic about it, impositions about the propositional content are perceived as high-ranking. In order to construct an argument about literature the student tries to efface her own presence

and use the conventions and propositional contents offered by authoritative sources on it (the academic community). As Caffi (1991) remarks about Italian theses (first degree), this position of the student writer reinforces the point she is making because it gives 'objectivity', factuality to her writing and her responsibility is diminished: she becomes a mouthpiece (Caffi, 1991: 92). In Chafe's words, she is less involved in the text (Chafe, 1982; Chafe & Danielewicz, 1987).

It seems as if the English student adopts the critical viewpoint of the academic community about the subject matter before completely mastering the formal tools of analysis and discourse structure, whereas the Italian student adopts the formal and discourse tools before ever attempting a critical viewpoint. In both cases the result is developmental, but moving on from different premises.

CHAPTER 9

METADISCOURSE

9.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on metadiscourse (discourse referring to itself), a phenomenon which has often been mentioned as related to the linguistic devices examined in the previous chapters. Metadiscourse is also closely connected to the interpersonal devices referring to the broader discursal situation and analysed in the next chapter: the relationship between writer and reader, between the participants and the linguistic code, between the participants and other texts (rhetorical questions, quotation marks and scare quotes, some punctuation devices, etc.). Chapters 9 and 10 are related because the strategies discussed reveal, on the part of the writer, an overt awareness of the text, the linguistic code and the communicative event, and the attempt to facilitate, guide or influence the reading process. The devices discussed in the next two chapters, therefore, can be considered to have a common rhetorical purpose in the text in which they appear.

9.2. Metadiscourse: definition and scope

Metadiscourse is discourse about discourse and relates to that capacity of natural language of referring to or describing itself. This phenomenon is called 'reflexivity' by Lyons (1977: 5). Metadiscourse and metatext are the most commonly used labels by linguists and they will be adopted here. Mauranen (1993), who prefers the term 'reflexivity' to metadiscourse, points out that whereas reflexivity only refers to the different ways in which natural languages talk about language, the terms metadiscourse and metatext can be ambiguous because they are related to the concept of metalanguage. Metalanguage means both reflexivity and also the formalised systems used by linguists and philosophers to describe natural languages (ibid.: 145). Having acknowledged this potential ambiguity, I will still retain the

more common labels of metadiscourse and metatext, while specifying that I use them in the first meaning presented above.

Metadiscourse and metatext are terms which are often used interchangeably; for the present study, however, it seems useful to draw a distinction between the two concepts which are strictly linked and partly overlapping. Metatext is reflexivity within the unit of the text, the text referring to itself or sections of it. Metadiscourse encompasses the context of production and can refer to the speech acts performed by writer or reader, when these are explicitly mentioned in the text (Conte, 1988). A clear-cut distinction between these two categories is neither possible nor desirable: there is a degree of overlapping since the text is the product of the discursual process and context. In the present study, 'metadiscourse' will be used as the superordinate and more general term when speaking of the phenomenon related to reflexivity.

In both spoken and written language, metadiscourse has the essential function of helping the addressee understand how the message is organised and how it can be better understood. In written language this operation is different from that of spoken language because in the former case one of the participants (or one group of participants) cannot give immediate feed-back and the addresser has to anticipate his/her reactions following expectations created by the characteristics of the communicative event. This introductory remark seems already to locate metadiscourse within the interpersonal function of language. The issue, however, is not simple and will be discussed below.

The function of metadiscourse is mainly that of helping the addressee understand the primary linguistic message, the propositional content. Therefore, metadiscourse is not specifically ideational: its main function is not a contribution to the subject

matter, but it offers the addressee information about how to process the propositional content. Changing one linguistic element means changing the whole linguistic picture, but even so it can be said that metadiscourse does not directly influence the ideational message of the text. Vande Kopple (1985) defines metadiscourse as the linguistic devices which do not add propositional material but help organise, classify, interpret such material and reveal the presence of the writer in the text. This viewpoint, taken from Lautamatti (1978, reprinted 1987) and re-elaborated by Crismore & Farnsworth (1990), is only partly shared by Mauranen (1993: 147) who remarks that metadiscourse does convey information, even though of a different kind from other sections of text. This remark is justified since no stretch of text belongs entirely to any one macrofunction, nor does it entirely exclude any of the three, but the main purpose of metadiscourse is not to convey propositional content.

Another of Mauranen's objections to Lautamatti (1987), Vande Kopple (1985) and Crismore & Farnsworth (1990) concerns the inclusion within metadiscourse of modal and attitudinal markers as linguistic features which reveal the presence of the writer in discourse. As Mauranen points out, modal and attitudinal markers are not necessarily reflexive (metadiscoursal) since they do not primarily refer to the discourse itself, but usually convey the writer's attitude towards the propositional content and towards the readers. In the present study, modality and attitudinal markers have been analysed in Chapters 7 and 8, since they are not considered part of metadiscourse.

From what has been said about metadiscourse, the two Hallidayan metafunctions which concern this linguistic phenomenon seem to be mainly, but not solely, the interpersonal and textual metafunctions. The textual metafunction is, however, a sort of subsidiary function within Halliday's system (Halliday, 1978: 50; 1985:

xiii): it does not directly derive from either Bühler's or Malinowski's categorisations (like the other two Hallidayan metafunctions), but it was added on 'because it is intrinsic to language: it is the function that language has of creating text, of relating itself to the context - to the situation and the preceding text.' (Halliday, 1978: 48)

Accepting this definition of textual metafunction, metadiscourse would be part of it; the status of the textual metafunction, however, has been the object of debate from the start and other linguists have offered different models for categorising language macrofunctions. Widdowson (1984) argues that there are two principal functions of language: the conceptual and the communicative. The former, close to Halliday's ideational function, 'provides the individual with a means of establishing a relationship with his environment, of conceptualizing and so, in some degree, controlling reality' (ibid.: 70). The latter function allows the individual to engage in social interaction and corresponds to Halliday's interpersonal function. As far as the textual function is concerned, Widdowson sees it as belonging to the communicative function because it provides the linguistic version of the proposition which is appropriate to the context and the shared knowledge of that specific communicative interaction. Within this perspective, metadiscourse belongs to the communicative function and it is therefore strictly related to the interpersonal aspect of language.

Sinclair (1983) argues for a two-plane discourse which, in some respects, reflects Widdowson's distinction: the 'autonomous plane' is the propositional content of discourse and the 'interactive plane' encompasses all the aspects of language in use between individuals; in particular, the ideational function is part of the autonomous plane and the attitudinal function is part of the interactive plane. What Halliday calls the textual metafunction seems to be labelled 'organisational function' and belongs to the interactive plane (as in Widdowson's model); connectives, however, mainly

belong to the autonomous plane because they contribute to the construction of the ideational content, but they also share the interactional status belonging to the organisational function. In other words, in Sinclair (1983) connectives have characteristics which relate them to both planes of language and, as a consequence, the Hallidayan textual metafunction is a shared property of the two planes. Within this model of language functions, metadiscourse belongs to both planes.

Widdowson's and Sinclair's models share a binary view of language functions and have points in common; nevertheless, Sinclair's model seems to represent better the complexity of some aspects of metadiscourse (connectives, for instance). Metadiscourse, therefore, mainly belongs to the interpersonal metafunction, but it also relates to the ideational one (without being centrally ideational) and, within Halliday's model, to the textual one.

Since metadiscourse is a linguistic phenomenon which cannot be exclusively ascribed to one or the other metafunctions, the distinction between textual and interpersonal metadiscourse (made by Vande Kopple, 1985, adopted by Crismore & Farnsworth, 1990, Crismore *et al.*, 1993) is neither viable nor fruitful.

Two characteristics highlighted by Mauranen (1993) can contribute to placing metadiscourse more centrally within the interpersonal function: the authorial presence is criterial for metadiscourse and metadiscourse is an expression of self-awareness in the text:

text reflexivity is not an indication of the writer's presence in the text in general, but an explicit expression of a writer's awareness of the current discourse as text, that is, with his or her awareness that he/she is dealing with discourse, with linguistic expressions which are putting across a message. (Mauranen, 1993: 152)

Once metadiscourse is so defined, its scope is much narrower than the scope of Vande Kopple's study and Crismore & Farnsworth's categorisation. Mauranen calls

their models 'integrative approaches to metatext' rather than strictly metadiscoursal. For Italian, a comprehensive approach of this kind is Fellin & Pugliese (1992).

9.3. Categorisations of metadiscourse

Three studies are at the basis of the categorisation used in this chapter: Vande Kopple, 1985; Crismore & Farnsworth, 1990; Mauranen: 1993. In particular, my own approach is rather similar to Mauranen's: the categorisation used for the data analysis is derived from hers and adapted to my own data.

Vande Kopple (1985) builds on Lautamatti's taxonomy of 'non-topical material' and divides metadiscourse into categories which have been adopted and developed by Crismore & Farnsworth (1990) for their analysis of scientific articles. Both studies include reflexive devices, attitudinal markers and even language which mainly contains propositional content (commentaries, for instance). The two studies are not analysed here in detail because some of their categories do not belong to metadiscourse as defined in this chapter. However, the categories which are relevant for the analysis of the data will be introduced in the sections that follow.

Mauranen (1993) builds on the earlier studies but limits the scope of metadiscourse dividing it into four main categories which, with some changes, will be adopted for the present analysis and discussed in the following sections: 1. references to the text; 2. discourse labels; 3. addressing the reader; 4. internal connectors.

Mauranen (1993) also introduces a main distinction in terms of explicitness of categories which will not be adopted. Analysing her data, she notices that there is a cline of metadiscoursal explicitness which goes from high to low explicitness. Expressions belonging to the former end of the scale are metadiscoursal expressions which refer to the text itself (*In the following section*), the latter end of the scale

includes expressions which do not directly refer to the text, might not be metadiscoursal in a different context or might be a borderline case between propositional and interpersonal devices. Mauranen herself admits that the distinction is not a dichotomy but rather a cline, as her data analysis shows, and there are borderline cases which are difficult to assign to either one or the other level. Additionally, the propositional content and its textual realisation are particularly difficult to distinguish when the subject matter is theoretical argumentation. The distinction is criterial for the analysis of Mauranen's data, but will not be retained here.

Before discussing the categories of metadiscourse used in this study, I will briefly examine the function metadiscourse has in text.

9.4. The function of metadiscourse

Summarising what has been said above, metadiscourse refers to the discourse itself; it reveals the presence of the writer who shows awareness of the text and attracts the reader's attention to its structure and purpose. Using metadiscourse, the writer explicitly signposts his/her text in order to facilitate its comprehension and offer the reader some guidance during the reading process. Therefore metadiscourse is mainly interpersonal (and textual) even if it can convey propositional meaning. Mauranen (1993) remarks that metadiscourse has an important rhetorical role in text because

'it aims at influencing the recipient's interpretation of the content conveyed in discourse, and is therefore a means of persuasion' (ibid.: 154).

This is mainly the case in experienced and professional writing, whereas the developmental quality of student writing renders metadiscourse a less efficient way of influencing the reader.

The presence of metadiscourse can be related to the concepts found in Hinds (1987) of writer-responsible and reader-responsible languages. Hinds argues that in some languages the greater responsibility for understanding written texts falls on the writer, in other languages on the reader. Comparatively, Hinds says, English belongs to the former type, Japanese to the latter type. Metadiscourse can be considered an element contributing to this cross-linguistic difference, since it helps make explicit the writer's textual choices and therefore guides the reading process.

The relevance of metadiscourse in a cross-cultural study is crucial. Cross-culturally the status, the relevance and the frequency of metadiscourse in the same text-type varies. In English there seems to be mainly a positive attitude towards the validity of metadiscourse in written language: it is regarded as a feature which helps the reader in the reading process (Booth, 1961; Vande Kopple, 1985; Crismore and Farnsworth, 1990; Williams, 1990; Crismore *et al.*: 1993). If Hinds's theory is confirmed, metadiscourse would be found to be one contributing element in considering English a writer-responsible language. In other languages and cultures, metadiscourse is considered patronising and often useless: Mauranen (1993) remarks that this is the case in Finnish and Finnish guides to good writing say that metadiscourse should be kept to a minimum. In this respect at least, it seems that Finnish tends to be a reader-responsible language. As far as Italian is concerned, metadiscourse does not seem to be a main concern of traditional writing manuals (Eco, 1977; Serafini, 1985; Bondioni, 1986; Lesina, 1986, among others). Even when connectives are mentioned as a fundamental tool of 'good' writing, there are no sections about metadiscourse as such (Serafini, 1985; Bondioni, 1986).

The hypothesis of the present study is that the English texts have more metadiscoursal occurrences than the Italian ones, since the Italian texts seem to have fewer interpersonal occurrences and fewer overt interventions by the writer.

9.5. Metadiscoursal categories

The four main types of metadiscourse discussed below and adapted from Mauranen (1993) are:

1. references to the text;
2. speech act markers (derived from Mauranen's 'discourse labels');
3. addresses to the reader;
4. connectives.

These metadiscoursal categories can be either metatextual (referring to the text or part of it, the product) or metadiscoursal (referring to the development of the discourse, its context of production and its participants, the process). This distinction is not made by Mauranen (1993), but the data analysis showed that some categories tend to belong more centrally to one or the other type: speech act markers, addresses to the reader and connectives tend to be metadiscoursal rather than metatextual, whereas references to the text are prototypically metatextual even though there are some metadiscoursal occurrences among them.

As far as the four main categories are concerned, some occurrences are borderline cases between one type and another and they can be interpreted either way in context, whereas other occurrences can be interpreted as reflexive (and therefore metadiscoursal) or non-reflexive. In general terms, in the former case I will list the occurrence as belonging to the dominant category; in the latter case, if the occurrence can be interpreted as reflexive, I will include it in the count. The problems encountered in the classification will be discussed in the data analysis.

The quantitative analysis of metadiscoursal devices will be based on the occurrences per number of words (Section 4.3.). This choice is not uncontroversial, since these

devices have an effect on the stretch of text rather than on the immediate textual environment. Mauranen (1993) uses the sentence as unit and counts the number of sentences with metadiscoursal devices; this choice might suit her data, but in the case of the present study it is not viable because there are instances occurring in clusters within the same sentence or even clause, and, more importantly, some metadiscoursal devices have a more limited scope (the clause), but others span across longer sections of text (across sentences or paragraphs) and in a few cases they can even refer to the text as a whole. As their name reveals, they are related to discourse or text, not to the sentence. In this perspective the percentage per number of words (only indicative and tentative) has the advantage of being homogeneous with the analyses of the other chapters.

9.5.1. References to the text

References to the text are those parts of the text which refer back to it or to sections of it. Occurrences of this metadiscoursal category are not very frequent: 30 instances in the English scripts (0.16%) and 31 occurrences in Italian (0.14%). It is possible to hypothesise that the limited use of this device is due to the fact that examination scripts are not divided into clear-cut sections the students can easily refer to as would be the case for other longer and more complex text-types.

In Vande Kopple (1985) the category of reference to the text does not exist and the expressions belonging to it are partly contained within the categories of text-connectives and commentaries. In Crismore and Farnsworth (1990), text references do not appear as an independent category either, and many of them are included within commentaries. These two studies, therefore, do include text references, but neither clearly distinguishes them from other metadiscoursal expressions. It is Mauranen (1993) who introduces the category as an independent part of metadiscourse and defines its characteristics.

The following are examples from the data of reference to the text:

E4-58-60 I would just like to reiterate the point I made at the beginning when I suggested that

E16-30-31 To answer this we need to look at authors other than Dickens.

E17-20-21 In seeking to debate this statement we must define what we mean by 'socially effective literature'.

*I3-66 A questo punto è lecito chiedersi se [...]
At this point is is fair one should ask whether [...]*

*I12-37 Si deve qui ricordare [...]
One should remember here [...]*

In the examples reported above the underlined passages refer to another part of the text or to the whole text. In these occurrences there are also other types of metadiscourse which will be examined below. It is interesting to notice that metadiscoursal devices can appear in clusters which contribute together to the effect of textual signalling. The Italian I3-66 and the English E4-58-60, E16-30-31, 17-20-21 are clear instances of reference to text followed by a speech act marker.

Expressions referring to texts different from the script itself were not taken into account because intertextuality is not a 'reflexive' device in that it refers to other texts and not to the one it belongs to. For this reason, references to the essay titles have not been counted.

Some expressions are ambiguous because they can refer either to the argumentation developed by the student (metadiscoursal) or to issues which are external to the text itself and rather propositional and ideational than textual and interpersonal. The following instance is a case in point:

E3-38-41 This symbol is highly suggestive of the confusion in which the family finds itself, it reveals that all is not as it appears to be. In this way it may seem that tragedy has become more sophisticated in form.

The underlined section refers both to the literary issue, external to the script, but also to the development of the argument, internal to the text and therefore metadiscoursal. In this case, the occurrence has been computed as metadiscoursal since it contributes to specify how the previous part of text fits into the argument at hand. There are instances, however, which cannot be included as metadiscoursal:

E2-25-27 I think that in some ways form has become less sophisticated than in the past, although this does not mean we are not creating more sophisticated plots and characters.

The underlined section refers to a fact external to the text (form has become less sophisticated, according to the student), rather than to the text itself.

This problem is even more relevant in Italian where there are several instances which are borderline between the textual and the propositional reference. The context might in some cases help the categorisation:

I13-3-6 Un buon metro d'analisi è quello che che parte dal generale della fenomenologia ed arriva al particolare, cioè all'embrione del fenomeno stesso.

A good yardstick for the analysis is one which starts from the general aspects of phenomenology and arrives at the detail, that is at the core.

I3-69-71 Ormai la prima ipotesi, nonostante molti l'abbiano sostenuta, è stata superata[...]

By now the first hypothesis has been dismissed, in spite of the fact that many have supported it [...]

In the first case the student refers to her own method of analysis in a highly indirect way and presents it as if it were, 'objectively', the ideal method. The impersonal and factual quality of the remark effaces the presence of the student writer but also gives it the external authority of what the student regards as a generally accepted truth. In the second example, the word *ipotesi* refers to both a propositional content external to the text and to the hypothesis the student has just expressed in the text as an argumentation within the structure of the script (I3-66-69). Other instances have not been counted as metadiscoursal because they are overtly propositional:

I1-16-17 E' in questo quadro che, dopo il '60, si inserisce l'esperienza della Scapigliatura[...]

It is in this situation that, after the 1860's, the experience of the Scapigliatura starts [...]

The Italian word *quadro* can refer to argumentation constructed by the student and to the historical situation. In the context the second interpretation is more suitable. In the Italian data, the uncertainty between the textual and the propositional reading is enhanced by the attempt of the students to efface their presence in the scripts and highlight the factual quality of their writing.

Whereas some occurrences are obvious references to what follows or precedes in the scripts, there are occurrences which can be considered metadiscoursal only indirectly, since they do not overtly mention other sections of the text while pointing at them. One example is the following occurrence:

E1-2-10 To see this change as a 'progress' from 'primitive' to 'sophisticated' is misguided for two reasons. First of all, [...] Secondly, [...].

The underlined section becomes metadiscoursal only if followed by the two conjuncts (*first of all, secondly*) which make explicit the relationship between sections of the script. A less clear-cut occurrence is the following:

E3-2-5 It is almost inevitable, therefore, that one will find oneself at least partly in agreement with it and that there will be points on which disagreement is possible.

In this passage there are no overt references to other sections of the script, but, in actual fact, this sentence introduces arguments for agreement and for disagreement which constitute the body of the script. The sentence signals in an indirect way what the structure of the script is going to be, therefore, the occurrence has been accepted as metadiscoursal even though there is no explicit reference to the following text: the sentence anticipates and prepares the reader for what follows.

As in the case previously described, the Italian data has several indirect instances which are borderline between propositional occurrences and textual occurrences. Again, the student tends to express her argumentation in a highly factual way which blurs the distinction between her textual choices and the propositional content:

115-44-49 Per quanto riguarda la narrativa, la Scapigliatura si muove in due direzioni principali: da un lato [...]. Dall'altro [...]

As far as fiction is concerned, Scapigliatura moves along two different directions: on the one side [...]. On the other [...]

The context clarifies the fact that this is a textual reference because the student is actually constructing her own argumentation, but the instance could also be categorised as propositional. There is no clear line to draw between one type of interpretation and the other: the analysis of the data shows a cline between clearly metatextual instances and content instances.

Among references to text there are also expressions which refer to terms mentioned in the scripts:

E5-10-11 The terms also address issues of 'correct' subject for literature.

In this case the terms the students is referring to are not a linguistic entity outside the text, but they are words which have a specific use in the script and they are defined for the script itself. The use is, therefore, metadiscoursal. Interestingly enough, the Italian scripts have only one metadiscoursal occurrence of this type (I13-6): terminology is always defined by critics or literary writers, the source of authority tends to be external to the text, rather than internal.

In some instances, references to text co-occur with other metadiscoursal expressions and help define the metadiscoursal function of that expression:

E11-72-78 Why, then, [...] do we have this marvellous tale which confronts the quintessentially modern plight? The answer is that primitive literature [...].

18-74-75 E'interessante a questo proposito citare un'opera di uno dei due maggiori autori scapigliati [...]

It is interesting, at this point (in the argumentation) to quote a work of one of the two main authors of Scapigliatura [...]

In the English example the word *answer* refers back in the text to the question and makes explicit the relationship between the two sections of the text (see addresses to the reader, Section 9.5.3.). In the Italian example, the anaphoric metadiscoursal

reference is reinforced by the speech act marker which prepares the ground for what follows.

Many expressions which are not specifically metadiscoursal can be recognised as metadiscoursal in a particular linguistic environment. In the following examples, the words *now* and *ora* are not a deictic time reference external to the text, but they mean 'at this point of the argumentation we can say that' referring to the 'tempo del discorso', as Renzi *et al.* (1995) call it:

E17-25-26 Now, when we talk of 'propaganda' we tend to think primarily of political propaganda.

I12-73 Manca ora da analizzare l'opera del Tarchetti [...]
Now the work of Tarchetti is left to be analysed [...]

Whereas the Italian instance is clearly textual, the English one is a borderline case because it can refer deictically to the present times and also to a specific section of the text (see also E3-42-44, E17-25-26).

Whereas references to text are prototypically metatextual, there are some instances which have also a metadiscoursal function: there are in-between cases in which there is a reference to a section of the text and to the development of the argumentation. In examples E11-72-78 and I8-74-75, *the answer* and *a questo proposito* refer both to the stretch of text and to the function of that specific stretch in the argumentation.

The use and frequency of references to the text are similar in Italian and in English, the only clear difference highlighted by the analysis is that the Italian occurrences tend to cluster towards the more propositional end of the cline whereas the English occurrences tend to be more prototypically metadiscoursal with some borderline cases.

9.5.2. Speech act markers

Speech acts markers are a category derived from Mauranen's discourse labels which are defined as

verbs of illocution or similar expressions to indicate the textual function of the part of text in question [...], or indeed the function of a missing part of the text [...], or the progression of the discourse [...]. (ibid.: 176)

'Discourse label' is a rather vague expression to define a phenomenon which is based on speech acts referring to the discourse process. For this reason, it seems more accurate to call this category 'speech act markers', an expression which is transparent as to the function these occurrences have in context.

E2-68-70 I hope I have explained why I think that this type of literary boxing into 'primitive' and 'sophisticated' is worthless throughout history or even in contemporary terms.

This is a complex occurrence of speech act marker in which two metadiscoursal aspects are present: there is a metatextual reference to the preceding text in the choice of the present perfect verb form, and, at the same time, the choice of the lexical verb *explain* is an explicit metadiscoursal reference to a speech act which forms a stage in the development of the writer's argumentation. The following Italian instance contains two markers:

I1-68-71 Si possono prendere in considerazione, a dimostrazione di questa convivenza di vecchio e nuovo, alcune poesie di Emilio Praga.

To instantiate this mixture of new and old elements, some of Praga's poems can be considered.

The following occurrences refer to what is going to come in the text:

E7-66-67 It is interesting to note in closing that [...]

I18-177 Concludendo, si può osservare che [...]

In conclusion, it is possible to remark that [...]

In the next examples the speech act markers are used to indicate the progression of the argumentation:

E10-77-78 *In fact, I would put forward the argument that literature [...]*

I18-112 *Si può esaminare, inoltre, un'altra poesia [...]*
 Additionally, another poem can be analysed [...]

Speech act markers can also indicate the function of a missing part of the text. In the English scripts there are no such examples, but there are 3 in the Italian (I1-51-52; I11-20; I11-175). The following instance is an indirect way of letting the addressee know that the student is aware of the distinction, but has decided to gloss over it:

I11-175-176 *Tralasciamo qui la differenziazione tra dualismo formale, alla Boito e dualismo 'patetico', alla Tarchetti o Praga, [...]*
 We do not mention here the difference between formal dualism, as in Boito, and 'pathetic' dualism, as in Tarchetti or Praga [...]

The majority of speech act markers are often expressed by mental or verbal processes (*I would not say that, it is possible to consider this, to state that, I would just like to reiterate the point, I suggested that, etc.*); however, not all speech acts are speech act markers (and consequently metadiscoursal): some can just refer to the propositional content and not to the function of that stretch of text within the argumentation. In particular, there are some unclear cases among the instances of mental processes.

There are also speech act markers where the illocutionary act is not expressed overtly:

E19-34-35 *Incidentally it was Dickens who first coined the phrase 'ragged' school.*

In this case *incidentally* is a style disjunct (Quirk *et al.*, 1985: 615): a verb of speaking is implicit in this type of expressions: 'I tell you incidentally'. *Incidentally* also signals to the reader that this proposition is parenthetical and therefore it does not constitute a stage in the progression of the argument. As Conte (1988: 47-48) remarks, these adverbs can be either metatextual or metadiscoursal (or

'metacommunicative' as she calls the latter group): she categorises *incidentalmente* as a metatextual adverb because it defines the function of the stretch of text. It seems to me, however, that *incidentally* is an in-between case since it can refer both to the function of the stretch of text and to the attitude of the addresser towards the stretch of text.

As Mauranen (1993) points out, nominalisations can also occur as speech act markers:

E3-63-64 [...] it is a matter of debate as to whether increasing sophistication is shown in the move from verse to more realistic prose.

I13-179 La Scapigliatura non è quindi, in ultima analisi, una appendice romantica.
Scapigliatura is not, in the final analysis, a romantic appendix.

In these cases the nominalisations refer to the speech acts of debating and analysing.

It is worth noticing that most speech act markers in the data are referential rather than performative in function: they point out to the reader what speech act the writer or/and the reader have performed, are performing or are going to perform. Only a few occurrences have a performative function: see, for instance, I8-35-36, I8-97-98, I9-128.

As far as the origin of speech act markers as a category is concerned, it does not appear either in Vande Kopple or in Crismore and Farnsworth. In Vande Kopple (1985) speech act markers are included within text connectives, code glosses (expressions which help the reader grasp the meaning of words, phrases or idioms) and action markers (similar to illocutionary markers). In Crismore and Farnsworth (1990) and Crismore *et al.* (1993) the only category which has some similarities with speech act markers is that of code glosses (*I will call them x, in short*). Mauranen realises that many of the expressions found under these labels are used to indicate the function in context of a section of text or its function in the progression

of the argumentation and, therefore, creates the category of discourse labels. The complex origin of Mauranen's discourse labels and the speech act markers of this study can be seen in the fact that some cases overlap with other types of metadiscoursal expressions. Some code glosses like *for instance*, *for example*, *i.e.* can be considered both as speech act markers and as connectives. On the other hand, very similar expressions such as *to give an example*, *an instance of this can be found in ...* are speech act markers and not connectives. In order to categorise these code glosses I used the following criterion: if they can be included within connectives I counted them as such, otherwise I counted them as speech act markers.

In some instances, speech act markers are used with other metadiscoursal expressions (see, for instance, the example quoted above I11-175-176 and instance E3-45-57): metadiscoursal expressions can often be found in clusters formed by different types of devices. There seems to be an effect whereby devices reinforce and clarify the metadiscoursal function of the others contributing to what could be called metadiscoursal environment.

Speech act markers are different from the other types of metadiscourse devices because they can be divided into occurrences which are personalised and occurrences which are impersonal. Personalised occurrences are either speech acts expressed in the first person singular or markers which appear in an environment where a first person singular is clearly expressed:

E2-62 *However, I would not say that [...]*

E2-1 *I think it is unfair to say that [...]*

I7-67 [...]*se mi è permessa un'altra personale analogia [...]*
 [...] if I am allowed another personal analogy [...]

I6-81 *Direi che, per quanto riguarda [...]*
 I would say that, as far as [...]

Impersonal speech act markers are the occurrences in which there is no reference to the writer of the script:

E13-23 It may be argued that [...]

I3-4 E'infatti rilevante sottolineare [...]
It is relevant to highlight [...]

There are also occurrences which can be considered in-between cases: the use of the first person plural in speech act markers cannot but include the writer, but it also distances the expression from her deictic centre (Section 5.4. *et passim*). Even in the case of instances where the first person plural can be considered a device to avoid the first person singular (mainly authorial *we*), the speech act marker containing *we* cannot be considered as personal as a first person singular since the student chose to render the expression less directly personal:

E15-28-29 In order to back up this statement we must examine the meaning of 'evident'.

E11-177 [...] spieghiamo brevemente che cosa si intende per dualismo.
[...] let us briefly explain what is meant by dualism.

There are therefore three sub-categories of speech act markers: personal expressions (related to the first person singular), first person plural expressions, impersonal expressions. The following table shows the occurrences of these subcategories in the English and in the Italian data:

TABLE 1: Speech Act Markers (SAM)

TABLE 1A: English data

personal SAM	11	11.9 % out of 92
<i>we</i> SAM	19	20.6%
impersonal SAM	62	67.3%
total number of occurrences	92	
frequency per 100 words	0.51%	

TABLE 1B: Italian data

personal SAM	8	10.8 % out of 74
<i>noi</i> SAM	14	18.9%
impersonal SAM	52	70.2%
total number of occurrences	74	
frequency per 100 words	0.34%	

The sample is too limited to speak of statistically analysable figures, but there does not seem to be any clear difference between English and Italian. What is remarkable, however, is the number of personal speech markers in Italian, that is speech acts which are overtly performed by the addresser. Table 1 above shows the link between overt references to the addresser and metadiscoursal choices in the Italian scripts, where the total number of first person singular deixis is much lower than in English (the total number of first person singular occurrences in Italian is 12, in English is 46). The analysis in Chapter 8 has shown that direct evaluations in the Italian scripts are mainly found in metadiscoursal environment, whereas in the English scripts evaluation strategies are commonly adopted both for metadiscourse and for propositional content.

Personal speech act markers are usually modalised (at times heavily modalised) in order to redress the overt imposition on the reader of the student's choices. The following example of metadiscourse is a parenthetical hedge:

I7-63-69 Così, il cieco [...] diventa simbolo di tutta una generazione di 'smarriti', di 'sradicati', disorientati dai disvalori capitalisti e, se mi è permessa un'altra personale analogia, 'ciechi' alle esigenze dello sviluppo.

So, the blind man [...] becomes a symbol of a whole generation of 'lost people', people 'without roots', disoriented by the capitalistic non-values and, if I am allowed another personal analogy, 'blind' to the needs of social development.

Impersonal occurrences contain a number of cases which have been categorised as metadiscoursal because the wider context in the script qualifies them as such, whereas the expression in itself could be either reflexive (metadiscoursal) or

propositional (non-metadiscoursal). As remarked for the references to text, in some cases impersonality can convey the impression that the clause reports propositional content rather than showing the function of the stretch of text. The following are examples in point:

E3-34-35 *This can be seen as a step forward in sophistication since [...]*

18-77 *In questo romanzo, infatti, si può notare una pars destruens [...]*
In this novel, one can notice a pars destruens [...]

The underlined sections describe discoursal moves, the context (a context wider than the stretches reported above) shows that expressions which explain the function of a stretch of text and expressions which simply contain propositional content referring outside the text are not always easy to distinguish when expressed impersonally. This use of metadiscourse contributes to the factual, apparently objective presentation of contents and blurs the distinction between the argumentation of the student, her discoursal choices and the actual propositional content. The following example contains, in the same sentence, the verb *consider* used propositionally because it refers to a fact external to the text (what people might think) and the verb *argue* used metadiscoursally because it signals the function of what follows (what the writer wishes to argue in the script):

E8-42-45 *If this can be considered a more sophisticated form of verse, then it can be argued that there has been a progress from a primitive to a more sophisticated form.*

One specific feature of the Italian markers is the link of some of the occurrences with addresses to the reader (analysed in the next section). Three impersonal occurrences (18-35, 18-97, 19-128) have a deontic meaning which indirectly includes the reader in the speech act:

18-97-98 *[...] basti pensare alla poesia Preludio [...]*
[...] it should be sufficient to think of the poem Preludio [...]

Indirectly, the addresser asks the reader to perform the act of remembering, the expressions, however, are encoded in the politeness of the impersonalised expressions commonly used in Italian formal writing. In the following section, a similar device will be analysed as addresses to the reader.

Speech act markers are a very versatile form of metadiscoursal expression: they can be expressed either impersonally or as a move overtly made by the writer; they can signal a series of moves in the text: setting the topic at the beginning, enabling the reader to follow the development of the argumentation, introducing examples, specifying the function of a stretch of text in the discourse, closing the argumentation and introducing a conclusion. Speech act markers are therefore a multifunctional and flexible device which contributes to establishing a relationship between writer and reader.

9.5.3. Addressing the reader

This type of metadiscoursal expression shows that the writer is overtly aware of the reader and draws his/her attention from the propositional content to the communicative event (Mauranen, 1993: 178). As Mauranen points out, addresses to the reader are fairly infrequent in academic writing where the relationship between writer and reader is backgrounded and the propositional content foregrounded. This is also the case for the student writing of the data, as shown below.

Before Mauranen's categorisation, Vande Kopple (1985) introduced a metadiscoursal type of expression called 'commentary'. According to Vande Kopple, commentary is used to draw readers into an implicit dialogue with the writer and Vande Kopple includes comments on the reader's moods, ideas and viewpoints (*most of you will oppose the idea that*), recommendations of a mode of procedure (*you might wish to read the last chapter first*), anticipations on what they

can expect (*you will probably find the following material difficult at first*), comments on reader/author relationship (*my friends, dear reader*). Crismore and Farnsworth (1990) adopt the label 'commentary' but expand it to contain a mixture of textual devices ranging from speech act markers (*I now report that*) to captions and graphics. In other words, the category has expanded so much that it includes expressions from other metadiscoursal types (mainly speech act markers and references to text) and propositional expressions which are not reflexive and, as a consequence, not metadiscoursal.

Following Mauranen's categorisation, only reflexive occurrences have been counted here, this means that only addresses to the reader referring to the text itself and the process of writing and reading it are included; other expressions, even though they refer to the reader and are highly interactive, have been excluded when non-reflexive. This is in fact the case of all the occurrences of second person (*you*) present in the English scripts. Moreover these occurrences are either impersonal or vague, rather than specifically referring to the reader (see, for instance E13-11, E23-47; see also Section 5.2.).

Conventionalised addresses to the reader in academic writing are expressions such as: *see below, see above, note that, consider, compare*, etc. Alternatively there are impersonal modalised variants such as *It should be noted, It is important to realise*, these can occur as instructions to the reader. Many addresses to the reader are conventionally abbreviated: *cf., v., N.B.* In the English scripts there is one occurrence of this type:

E5-14-16 (*Compare Byron's [...] to Marvell's [...]*)

There is, however, another occurrence in the imperative which is a direct and unusual address to the reader:

E24-63 *Remember, it is a personal attitude that we are talking about now [...]*

This occurrence is highly interactive because it is not a conventionalised expression (similar to *Recall that*), but an actual overt request to the reader to concentrate on a particular section of the text.

In the Italian scripts, there are a few examples (I5-54; I11-67; I11-76; I11-77; I11-89; I11-106; I11-112; I11-161) of conventionalised expressions which have a deontic meaning and are direct or indirect requests to the reader to perform an action. As mentioned in the previous section, these occurrences can be borderline with speech act markers for the obvious reason that they contain a metadiscoursal speech act, but they have the additional deontic meaning that, in markers, is only a peripheral feature of some Italian occurrences.

I5-54 Si pensi soprattutto al valore dato dagli scapigliati a concetti romantici [...]
Let us think of the value given by the Scapigliati to Romantic concepts [...]

I11-89 [...] vedi Preludio, poesia programmatica che fa parte della raccolta Penombre [...]

see Penombre, poem which is a manifesto-like composition belonging to the collection Penombre

The first instance is the deontic impersonal *si* (Renzi, 1988), it is not directly addressed to the reader, but its meaning includes both addresser and addressee and it is close to the inclusive authorial *noi*. The instance in example I11-89 is highly conventional in academic writing. It is interesting to notice that all occurrences but one belong to the same script (I11) which has a noticeable number of first person deixis. This type of address to the reader, not unusual in academic writing, seems to be just the idiosyncratic choice of one student, as far as the data are concerned.

All the other occurrences (in Italian and in English) are questions. As Mauranen remarks, the distinction between addresses to the reader and propositional expressions is not always straightforward and questions are a case in point: asking a question is an interaction between participants and usually it presupposes that

somebody is going to answer, nevertheless, not all questions are reflexive, that is refer to the text itself. In student writing, written questions will not be answered by the addressee, in some cases they are answered by the writer herself, in other cases there is no answer, in some cases the question requires no answer. This means that all questions are interactive, but not all are metadiscoursal, because not all questions refer to the text itself (Section 10.2.). In the following paragraphs, some types of question found in the scripts will be analysed.

In the data, some of the questions are 'expository' (Blakemore, 1992: 114), that is questions which the writer herself is going to answer and prepare the reader for the piece of argumentation which follows (Section 10.2.1.):

E17-46-48 Which of these degrees is the most 'socially effective'? This is, of course, a question which is for us to answer [...]

*I1-51-52 Appendice romantica o protodecadentismo? La risposta non è facile[...]
Romantic follow up or pre-decadentism? The answer is not easy [...]*

In the examples above the question is followed by an explicit reference to it which makes it overtly metadiscoursal. In other cases, expository questions contribute to signalling the development of the argumentation to the reader and are followed by an answer to the question itself, but there is no explicit expression connecting the answer to the question. In the following example, the question sets the topic for the argumentation which follows even if there are no explicit references to the question any more:

E24-14-15 So the question is, does interpretation work a greater social change than pure command?

*I14-20 Ma perché questo fenomeno si sviluppò proprio a Milano?
But why did this phenomenon develop precisely in Milan?*

In the following instance, instead, the parenthetic *in my opinion* indirectly relates the two sentences and makes it clear that the second directly relates to the question:

E16-13-16 But does literature that does not have evident designs on its readers work any better? The novel, in my opinion, can be just as socially effective as a political manifesto.

The instances where there is no overt link between question and answer are not completely uncontroversial cases; nevertheless, whenever the wider context relates the question to another stretch of text, I have considered the question as a metadiscoursal address to the reader.

There are also instances in which the adjacency pair of question and answer are overtly interactive: the student seems to report the question the reader is likely to ask at that point, foresees his/her objection and answers it:

I6-22-24 A Risorgimento concluso, dopo il 1860 circa, quali sono i nuovi ideali da proporre, da difendere? Non ci sono [...]

At the end of the Risorgimento, after about 1860, what are the new ideals to offer, to defend? There are none [...]

111-119-120 Dunque Tarchetti è romantico? No, non lo è [...]

So is Tarchetti romantic? No, he is not [...]

Some questions are addresses to the reader, but they cannot be considered metadiscoursal because they are not reflexive. In particular the problem arises with rhetorical questions, as Mauranen points out. She does not include rhetorical questions in metadiscourse because even if they address the reader, they are not reflexive (Mauranen, 1993: 179-180). Rhetorical questions are different from requests for information because they convey the impression that the addresser has a piece of information to communicate rather than to ask for: a characteristic which expository questions have as well (Blakemore, 1992: 115). Whereas there is a certain agreement on the definition of rhetorical questions, their function is controversial, as Section 10.2.2. will show. As far as metadiscourse is concerned, Mauranen's exclusion of rhetorical questions is justifiable in so far they are self-contained and do not refer to other stretches of text, but, in some contexts, even a rhetorical question can be considered a metadiscoursal address to the reader:

E1-28-29 But is not the faith which the omniscient narrator of Victorian novels asks of us rather primitive in fact? The belief that one person can know all that is going on, has access to 'truth', which he can eke out to the reader, is a misguided one.

In this example the question is rhetorical and it implies a strong positive statement (since the question is negative), however, the writer has elaborated on this and has given an evaluation and an answer at the same time, with the result of reinforcing her own point. Stati (1982) remarks that the adjacency pair 'rhetorical question plus self-answer' is a stylistic device used in writing to render it more dialogical. The addresser foresees the objections of the reader, but she also indirectly imposes on the reader an interpretation forcefully presented, while cashing in on the pragmatic advantages of indirectness (Stati, 1982: 198; 203). The example above is not the only instance of rhetorical question followed by a sort of answer in the English scripts (whereas there are no rhetorical questions in the Italian scripts). I have computed these instances as metadiscoursal.

The total number of addresses to the reader in the scripts is reported in TABLE 2

TABLE 2: Addresses to the reader (AR)

TABLE 2A: English scripts	
13	Questions followed by overt or covert reference to it
6	Questions and rhetorical cases (less clear cases)
2	Other
21	Total 0.11%
TABLE 2B: Italian scripts	
6	Questions followed by overt or covert reference to it
8	Other
14	Total 0.06%

Table 2 shows that only two addresses to the reader are not questions in the English scripts (the imperative occurrences E5-14-16 and E24-63). The table also shows that there are 6 occurrences which are controversial cases because the reference in the text that follows is not as clear-cut as for the other instances. In Italian, instead,

there are fewer occurrences, but there are more conventionalised expressions instructing the reader to perform a speech act. However, script I11 skews the results because it contains 6 out of 7 occurrences of these conventionalised expressions.

9.5.4. Connectives

Halliday and Hasan (1976) define 'conjunction' as a semantic relation which specifies 'the way in which what is to follow is systematically connected to what has gone before' (ibid.: 227). In this respect connectives can be reflexive and metadiscoursal: they overtly indicate the relationship between sections of the text. This relationship exists independently from the actual presence of connectives in the text, but connectives make it explicit. Connectives, therefore, belong to what Beaugrande & Dressler (1981) call 'cohesion', that is the syntactic devices which are a signal of interconnections between sentences or sections of text. Halliday & Hasan (1976), use 'cohesion' in a much broader meaning and do not clearly distinguish it from 'coherence' which is the pragmatic quality of a text in which there is a 'continuity of senses', that is 'the mutual access and relevance within a configuration of concepts and relations' (Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981: 84). This distinction made by Beaugrande and Dressler is now widely accepted.

Given this definition of coherence, it is clear that there is no need to use connectives to obtain a coherent text; the question is therefore: what is the function of connectives in texts? Several studies have investigated this issue. Among others, empirical studies by Carrell (1987), Morrow (1989), Mauranen (1993) seem to confirm the importance of connectives in facilitating the reading process. These studies seem to confirm that a text can be readable without connectives, but its rhetorical impact on the reader is less effective.

From what has been said so far, it is clear that connectives contribute to the interpersonal and to the textual macrofunctions within the Hallidayan model of language, but they also contribute to Halliday's ideational macrofunction. The ideational macrofunction has a 'logical' and an 'experiential' component: the logical component is expressed through recursive structures and is represented in the form of parataxis and hypotaxis, including relations such as coordination, apposition and condition (connectives can be related to this component); the experiential component expresses the content itself (mental and physical world) (Halliday, 1978: 48-49). The complex status of connectives and their relation to the ideational function of language are confirmed by the position they occupy within Sinclair's model of language, briefly introduced in Section 9.2. above. Sinclair (1983) argues that cohesive connectors (as he calls connectives) are textual features which partly belong to the 'autonomous plane' and are therefore close to the ideational function; but at the same time, they relate to the 'interactive plane' of language use (the interpersonal macrofunction in Halliday).

Connectives are therefore a complex and articulated category which a variety of studies have analysed as a whole or in part: here I will only mention some fundamental research. A seminal contribution in the field is Halliday & Hasan (1976) whose study includes conjunctions, adjuncts and conjuncts within the category they label as conjunction or, more precisely, conjunctive expressions, one of the devices which give cohesion to a text. Conjunction is divided into external and internal: the former group establishes a relationship between the propositional content and the text itself and therefore it is not metadiscoursal (and it mainly belongs to the ideational function of language); the latter group establishes a relationship between sections of the text and would be therefore metadiscoursal. The examples given by Halliday and Hasan (1976) to show this difference are the following:

- a. *Next he inserted the key into the lock.*
- b. *Next, he was incapable of inserting the key into the lock.*

The first instance is external (referring to the phenomenon), the second internal (referring to the textual structure).

A complementary perspective to Halliday and Hasan's distinction between internal and external conjunctions can be found in Sweetser (1990: 76-112). Sweetser argues that internal conjunction interrelates propositions in discourse whereas external conjunction interrelates occurrences (or more generally situations) in the experiential 'sociophysical' world. Using Lyons' scale of semantic levels of abstraction (Lyons, 1977: 442-443), internal conjunctions are related to third order entities, that is abstract entities such as propositions; external conjunctions are related to second order entities (events, processes, states-of affairs located in time). This characteristic of conjunction can be compared to other aspects of language: a parallel distinction can be drawn between epistemic and deontic modality respectively (see Sections 7.4. and 7.5.) and modes of discourse (Chapter 11; Mitchell, 1996).

In practical terms, the difference between internal and external is not always obvious and clear-cut since the same conjunctions (maintaining Halliday & Hasan's terminology) are used both to construct the propositional content and the text itself (see Berretta, 1984). Moreover, as Mauranen (1993) points out, in some types of texts, the distinction between internal and external use can be blurred: as far as academic writing is concerned, in empirical studies the distinction between the reported study and the text reporting is fairly straightforward, whereas in more theoretical studies 'the study, or the argument, does not exist independently of its expression in quite the same way' (ibid.: 160). The distinction 'internal/external', however, has to be retained because it is relevant to discriminate between

metadiscoursal and non-metadiscoursal occurrences: metadiscoursal connectives relate third order entities (abstract propositions belonging to discourse), non-metadiscoursal ones relate second order entities (external events and processes which happen outside the text itself).

In Italian the distinction between internal and external connectives is based on the principles already discussed, as Berretta (1984), Bazzanella (1985), Ellero (1986) and Fellin & Pugliese (1992) show. Berretta (1984) speaks of semantic and textual connectives, instead of internal and external and points out the difficulty of keeping such a clear-cut categorisation. Bazzanella (1985) and Ellero (1986) use Van Dijk's (1977) terminology and speak of 'connettivi semantici e pragmatici'. Renzi *et al.* (1995) summarises the main issues and offers a seminal contribution for Italian analysing the difference between pragmatic and semantic uses of some 'segnali discorsivi'.

Mauranen (1993) analyses 'connectors' (this is the term she uses to define the phenomenon) as part of metadiscourse. When defining connectors, she says that they consist of conjunctions (*and, or, but, etc.*) and linking adjuncts (*consequently, at the same time, as a result, etc.*) (ibid.: 159). In fact, it is clear from the examples she reports that she includes also conjuncts in the count of connectors (ibid.: 180-183). She also maintains the difference between internal and external, which is fundamental to recognise reflexive and, therefore, metadiscoursal occurrences.

In the present study, I use the general term 'connectives' (Warner, 1985) for the discussion of this linguistic phenomenon, but in the actual analysis of the scripts, I will concentrate on conjuncts, as defined by Quirk *et al.* (1985: 632): conjuncts are adverbials linking independent grammatical units (sentences, paragraphs or larger units) and have a wider scope in discourse than all the other adverbials. This

definition is compatible with the studies on which the Italian analysis is based: Berretta (1984), Ellero (1986) and Renzi *et al.* (1995).

Only internal occurrences (reflexive and metadiscoursal) are counted in the data, however the distinction between internal and external is not always straightforward and there are controversial occurrences. Since the same conjuncts are used to organise the text (text-internal) and the argument (text-external), some fairly abstract arguments are not easily distinguished from the text that presents them. The examples that follow are fairly clear instances of text-internal conjuncts:

E3-42-44 Other arguments may be drawn from these three plays, however, which can be used to refute the statement in the question.

E5-25-28 By working on two levels Swift's construction and intentions are far more sophisticated than the moral narratives of Richardson for example, yet these forms were still regarded as inferior to poetry at the time.

I4-48 Inoltre, si era notevolmente sviluppata l'industria editoriale [...]
Additionally, the publishing industry had developed in a remarkable way [...]

I9-115 [...] ad esempio il tema della fusione delle due donne < sic > [...]
[...] for example the theme of the merging of the two women [...]

The above occurrences link sections of text or discourse, whereas other occurrences seem to link facets of the propositional content:

E4-41-43 Both authors use a host of realistic detail to add authenticity and therefore encourage their audience to relate to them.

The external use of *therefore* (in the previous example) can be compared to the internal occurrence in the same script (E4-4-8) and also to the following example which can be considered internal, since it links the last paragraph with the previous stretch of text:

E4-56-58 We can see therefore that there is much similarity between two texts of vastly different periods and styles [...]

In the following Italian example *però* is text internal, and *allo stesso tempo* is text external because it refers to the period of time the student is analysing; in other contexts, however, *allo stesso tempo* is text internal:

I9-67-68 Allo stesso tempo, però viene anche ammirato e invidiato per la sua enorme importanza storica e letteraria [...]

At the same time, however, he is also admired and envied for his enormous historical and literary importance [...]

Other examples of conjuncts used alternatively as text-external and text-internal devices are *thus*, *dunque*, *quindi*:

E20-8-9 Plato thus proposed a form of censorship [...]

This occurrence is external, because it links events (second order entities) while the following seem to refer to the structure of the text itself (third order entities, abstract propositions):

E17-47-54 This is, of course, a question which is for us to answer, for the effectiveness springs not from the degree to which the designs on the reader are evident, but rather from the quality of the writing and the validity of the point which is contained within the writer's design. Thus, the most socially effective literature is that which is well written and which makes a valid point.

I2-28-30 Assistiamo dunque a grandi cambiamenti caratterizzati dalla nascita di una nuova mentalità utilitaristica [...]

Thus we can see that there are great changes characterised by the beginning of a utilitarian mentality [...]

Some instances may be referring both to the structuring of the text (and the speech act the student performs) or to the developing of events (external to the text). The following occurrences have been counted as text internal, but they are not uncontroversial:

I8-7-8 [...] la Scapigliatura nasce dunque come movimento polemico in questo clima [...]

[...] thus Scapigliatura was born in this situation as a polemical movement [...]

E15-7-10 At its most basic level if a book is not designed specifically to attract readers it will not be read, and thus any novel writer will make his or her book as attractive to the general public as possible.

Connectives which have a syntactic function (called 'structural connectors' in Mauranen, 1993: 182) are not counted because they are elements which cannot be omitted and therefore they do not relate to the writer's awareness of 'signposting' her text. There are, however, difficulties of categorisation, because the same connectives can both link two stretches of discourse or be syntactically necessary in the sentence. The following example shows two different uses of *ma*:

I17-102-106 Questo romanzo ha un carattere frammentario ed è articolato per scene, ma questa struttura sconnessa non va considerata in chiave negativa, ma come anticipazione del romanzo di fine secolo.

This novel is fragmented and articulated into scenes, yet this disconnected structure should not be considered in a negative light, but as an anticipation of the novel of the end of the century.

The first *ma*, which is best rendered with *yet* in English, links stretches of text (it shifts the attention on a specific piece of information), the second *ma* has a structural meaning and cannot be omitted (on the function of *ma* in Italian see Ellero, 1986).

If some cases are fairly clear, others are quite controversial. In particular, a series of occurrences with *yet* can be either internal or external and the decision to include them as one or the other is debatable.

The following occurrences are controversial. I counted them as text-internal (they seem to link two propositions of the writer's), but it could also be argued that they refer to events external to the texts:

E19-3-7 Through the mass media we have been made aware of the poverty and need of huge numbers of people around the world. Yet as a society the help and aid we give these people has not increased [...]

E19-42-46 He [Dickens] was a novelist first and foremost, a social critic second. Yet he had a profound effect on society.

The following table summarises the figures for connectives in the scripts:

TABLE 3: Connectives

	occurrence	frequency
English scripts	166	0.93%
Italian scripts	208	0.97%

The sample is too small to be significant and so is the difference between the Italian and the English data. However, it can be argued that connectives are the only metadiscoursal feature which is slightly more frequent in Italian than in English. Different reasons can be put forward for this: English tends to be more paratactic than Italian, Italian students had more time to structure their text, connectives are, among the metadiscoursal devices, the least overtly interpersonal and the most closely connected to the ideational metafunction through its logical component (this would tie in with the rather factual quality of the Italian scripts). A related aspect is the emphasis given to connectives in Italian writing manuals and pedagogical grammars as essential elements of cohesion in text, whereas other metadiscoursal features (usually present in English writing manuals) are not generally mentioned.

9.6. Some concluding remarks

Table 4 summarises occurrences of metadiscoursal features in the scripts:

TABLE 4: Metadiscourse**TABLE 4A: English scripts**

Type	Occurrences	Mean %
Reference to the text	30	0.16%
Speech Act Markers	92	0.51%
Addresses to the reader	21	0.11%
Connectives	166	0.93%
Total	309	1.73%

TABLE 4B: Italian scripts

Type	Occurrences	Mean %
Reference to the text	31	0.14%
Speech Act Markers	74	0.34%
Addresses to the reader	14	0.06%
Connectives	208	0.97%
Total	327	1.53%

Table 4 shows that the least frequent metadiscoursal devices both in English and in Italian are addresses to the reader; the straightforward reason for this is the highly interactive quality of the device and the limited use that can be done of it in a rather formal and factual text-type which privileges the ideational rather than the interpersonal macrofunction. The occurrences of this device are either the adjacency pair question and answer (almost a fictionalised exchange with the reader, where the interaction is controlled by the addresser) or the conventionalised forms of imperatives found in formal writing. The one exception is an occurrence in English which is a rather more unusual exchange with the reader (E24-63, Section 9.5.3.).

The other device which has a limited frequency is reference to text. In this case the reason seems to be structural, since the scripts are not divided into sections that can be mentioned and recalled by the writer, and the students have a limited time to organise their discourse in examination conditions.

The most frequent devices in both languages are speech act markers and connectives. This is probably due to the fact that these devices are the most flexible and have more functions than the other two. Both connectives and speech act markers can be used to initiate and conclude an argumentation, make explicit the development of the discourse, introduce examples and so on. Whereas connectives and speech act markers are related to discoursal moves and to the way in which the argumentation is articulated and develops, references to the text establish a network

of relations between different sections of text, and addresses to the reader establish a direct relation between the participants to the communicative event and the text itself.

As far as the comparison between the English and the Italian occurrences is concerned, the hypothesis that English has more metadiscoursal devices than Italian has not been confirmed: the results are too tentative and the number of occurrences similar. There are, however, a few aspects that can be summarised here as results of the analysis:

- English has more addresses to the reader and instances are more widespread in the scripts. One of the Italian scripts (E11) skews the results for this metadiscoursal device since it contains 9 occurrences out of a total of 14.
- A finding which is consistent with the analysis in Chapter 8 shows that the Italian first person singular deixis is rare, but mostly found in metadiscoursal environment (speech act markers). This would confirm the tendency of Italian student writers to refer overtly to their role in textual rather than in propositional contexts. English students, on the contrary, seem to refer more directly to the propositional content.
- There is a generalised tendency in the Italian scripts to have occurrences which are borderline cases with propositional (and therefore non-reflexive) instances. This is the case in English as well, but the Italian scripts tend to render the content and even the textual choices more factual and apparently external to the discourse.

CHAPTER 10

VOICES IN THE SCRIPTS: INTERPERSONAL DEVICES REFERRING TO THE CONTEXT OF THE DISCOURSE

10.1. Introduction

The devices examined in this chapter refer to the wider context of discourse: the relation between writer and reader, between particular words or sections of a text and the linguistic code, between the analysed text and other texts. These devices, different from, but complementary to metadiscourse, help define the role of the participants and their relationship with the context of communication. More specifically, the chapter focuses on some of the devices which most overtly reveal the 'voice' of the addresser and other voices which she brings into her text. By using questions, quotation marks, brackets (and other devices which are not analysed here), the 'intonation' of the written voice becomes foregrounded in the context and conveys the writer's attitude towards the propositional content, the addressee or even the communicative event itself.

The voices other than the addresser's contribute to the multifaceted phenomenon of intertextuality (discussed in Section 10.3.). The aim of the present chapter is not a complete analysis of intertextuality in student writing because this would imply broadening the scope of research (investigating textbooks, lecture notes, lecture hand-outs, the transcripts of the lectures and seminars the students attended, etc.). Additionally, intertextuality is also influenced by the personal readings of the students, their educational and cultural background, the discussions with fellow-students, and other variables. The sections that follow will focus on a more limited range of intertextual instances: the stretches of text overtly signalled as voices different from the writer's own using quotation marks and references to sources.

Only a few of the linguistic devices highlighting the voices in the text are examined here. The criteria for choosing these devices have been their relevance to the interpersonal metafunction of language and the possibility of comparing them in the two sets of data (in English and in Italian). Questions, quotation marks, attributors (references to authoritative sources), use of brackets help the writer establish an overt relation with the reader and reveal the type of role the student allows for herself in the text. Ultimately, these devices can be related to the concept of the addresser's involvement in the text (Chafe, 1982, 1985; Chafe & Danielewicz, 1987; Caffi and Janney, 1994) and the level of shared knowledge between the addresser and the addressee as encoded in the texts (Brown & Yule, 1983; Sperber & Wilson, 1995).

The starting point for the analysis is the general hypothesis that English students tend to hide their own voice in the text less than the Italian students.

10.2. Questions

Questions are a highly interactive feature of texts because they usually imply a dialogic relationship of the addresser either with the addressee, with herself or with the structure of the text, as will be clarified later in this section.

As mentioned in Section 9.5.3., all questions which are referred to in another stretch of the same text are metadiscoursal. There are, however, questions which are usually not metadiscoursal, such as rhetorical questions. In this section, I will analyse all occurrences of questions and rhetorical questions in the texts focusing on their function(s) in context. Metadiscoursal occurrences (already analysed in Section 9.5.3.) will be included since the aim of this section is to identify the main uses of questions in my data independently of their metadiscoursal function.

Before analysing the data, it is necessary to define the different types of questions that can be found in the scripts. The issue does not seem to be uncontroversial: the structure is interrogative, but the function, the illocutionary force and the illocutionary point of interrogative sentences contribute to a complex phenomenon.

For the present analysis it is necessary to draw a fundamental distinction which is explained by Lyons in the following terms:

What seems to be required [...] is a distinction between asking a question of someone and simply posing the question (without necessarily addressing it to anyone). When we pose a question, we merely give expression to, or externalise, our doubt; and we can pose questions which we do not merely expect to remain unanswered, but which we know, or believe, to be unanswerable. (Lyons, 1977: 755)

Lyons also points out that this type of analysis encompasses not only 'information-seeking questions' but also 'various kinds of rhetorical and didactic questions' (ibid.: 755). Lyons, therefore, argues that questions cannot be simply considered a type of 'mand' (commands, directives) as other scholars have maintained (Hare, 1949 and Lewis, 1969 cited in Lyons, 1977: 753)

Analysing the issue from a pragmatic viewpoint, Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995) seem to confirm in pragmatics what Lyons argues in semantics. They maintain that an analysis of questions based on Speech Act Theory is not sufficient: Searle (1969: 69) and Bach and Harnish (1979: 48) consider interrogatives as special sub-types of directive speech acts. This interpretation would easily include information-seeking questions but not other types of questions that can be commonly found in spoken and written interaction. Sperber and Wilson (1986, 1995: 251-253) offer their own global interpretation of questions based on relevance theory:

Relevance, like desirability, is a two-place relation: what is relevant to one person may not be relevant to another. Thus, in interpreting a question, the hearer must always make some assumption about who the speaker thinks the answer would be relevant to. Different assumptions yield different types of questions. (Sperber & Wilson, 1995: 252)

The remark is that it is rather vague, but Blakemore (1992) took up Sperber and Wilson's argumentation and used it for an analysis of questions which will be adopted here.

Lyons' and Sperber and Wilson's treatment of questions highlights a point which is fundamental for the present study since the data only contain occurrences which are not prototypical information-seeking questions. The writer knows well that she will not receive any answer from the addressee, and therefore only the analysis of the context can yield some information on the function the question has in the script.

Blakemore (1992: 114-116), drawing on Sperber and Wilson (1986) and Wilson and Sperber (1988), distinguishes the following types of questions:

1. requests for information;
2. exam questions;
3. expository questions: *What are the objections to this analysis? First ...*
4. rhetorical questions: *Am I always going to pick up your clothes?*
5. speculative questions / musings: *Now, who is going to win the by-election tomorrow?*
6. guess question (a question in a guessing game).

Only types 3, 4 and 5 are relevant for my data and can be found in the data analysis. The three types of question reveal a main difference of use: Blakemore (1992: 115) points out that rhetorical and expository questions can be distinguished from all the other types (even from speculative questions) because they give the impression that it is the speaker who has information to give. Blakemore argues that these questions 'are relevant as interpretations of answers which [the speakers] believe to be relevant to the hearer' (ibid.: 115). In other words, expository and rhetorical questions signal that an answer is going to be provided (explicitly or implicitly, respectively) and that the addresser is not seeking information, but is the

provider of the information. However, the data analysis will show that in student writing the distinction between questions relevant to the writer and questions relevant to the reader is not as clear cut as in Blakemore's examples.

The following sections will define and describe the three main types of question which can be found in the data: expository questions, rhetorical questions and speculative questions.

10.2.1. Expository questions and speculative questions

Expository questions can be found (mainly, but not exclusively) in written expository (or argumentative) texts and can have different functions. Usually they focus the attention of the reader on the issue which follows in the argumentation. In the data, questions are mainly used when the issue is controversial and they often summarise one of the crucial problems in the argumentation.

The students use questions mainly in two ways: in some cases questions draw attention to a problematic issue on which the student writer takes a clear stand and her ensuing argument is an answer to the question. In other instances the student has no clear opinion because the issue is highly controversial or uncertain and the question helps both herself and the reader to focus on the complexity of the issue; in this case, an attempt to answer the question or just an elaboration of the controversial point might follow. Here are examples from the data:

E11-72-78 Why, then, in a 'primitive' literature (early Chaucer) where we are supposed to have tradition binding us so completely that the modern crises between fate and choice does not arise, do we have this marvellous tale which confronts the quintessentially modern plight? The answer is that [...]

E17-46-47 Which of these degrees is the most 'socially effective'? This is, of course, a question which is for us to answer [...]. Thus, the most socially effective literature is that which is well written and which makes a valid point.

E23-21-25 What is the socially effective literature anyway? Does it want us to change aspects of our political or social lives? Does it want us to re-assess our individual places in society?

I6-80-81 Quali sono queste immagini, queste tematiche?

Direi che [...]

What are these images, these metaphors? I would say that [...]

I11-197-198 Gli Scapigliati, dunque, tardo-romantici o pre-decadenti? A mio giudizio tardo-romantici e pre-decadenti insieme.

Are Scapigliati, then, late-Romantics or pre-decadents? In my opinion, late-Romantics and pre-decadents at the same time.

Examples E11-72-78, E17-46-47, I6-80-81, I11-197-198 are expository questions which express fundamental issues dealt with in the script, the answers which follow show the students' viewpoints on the issue. These occurrences are also metadiscoursal since they are referred to in another section of the text (see Section 9.5.). The third instance (E23-21-25) is not metadiscoursal because there is no clear reference to these questions in the script even though they focus on the fundamental problem the student is dealing with. Using the four questions, the student emphatically expresses the complexity of the issue and the lack of straightforward answers. The function of these questions is also partly speculative, since the student is trying to find a way to tackle the problem and expresses to herself and the reader its complexity. These questions can be considered both expository and speculative. In the English data there are four contexts (and 7 questions altogether) when this occurs. In Italian there is only one instance of an expository question with a speculative overtone created by the type of immediate comment on the question the student gives:

I1-51-54 Appendice romantica o protodecadentismo? La risposta non è facile, perché optare per una definizione o l'altra, significherebbe dare un giudizio troppo limitativo di questo movimento [...]

Romantic follow up or pre-decadentism? The answer is not easy because choosing one or the other definition would mean giving a limiting judgement of this movement [...]

In some cases, the student uses expository questions to pre-announce the problem that she will tackle in her argumentation and clarify to the reader the textual direction she is taking. In other cases expository questions are border-line with speculative questions or seem to overlap with them. Speculative questions are

similar to what Quirk *et al.* (1985) call 'ratiocinative questions'. They are questions used by the addresser to focus one's own idea when an issue is controversial, they are not requests for information (sometimes there is no possible answer), but 'musings'. They can be entirely self-addressed or they might not be (the addresser might involve the addressee in his/her musings). The addresser, therefore, does not have an answer to the question, but s/he is searching for one. In this respect, speculative questions are rather more similar to prototypical informational questions than to fully-fledged expository questions. In the Italian data, however, there are no speculative questions as such, only the border-line case quoted above (I1-50-51).

As mentioned before, in student writing, especially in the English data, there is a degree of overlap between expository and speculative questions because, in some contexts, the student is uncertain about the argumentation at hand and she poses one or more questions to focus the issue, as it were, for the reader and for herself. In some cases (such as E23-21-25 above) the stretch of text following the question is not a clear development of the issues raised in the question, but an attempt to interpret and reformulate the question. Since the student constructs the text as she goes along and in a limited amount of time, the questions can become musings, similar to those found in conversation, rather than fully-fledged expository devices (more typical of written expository texts).

Another aspect which is specific to student writing is the relevance of the answer. Student writing is written under the stimulus of an examination task set not to seek for information, but to assess the ability of the student to construct an argumentation. This means that both the task itself and its response are relevant to both addresser and addressee for different reasons. The student, therefore, when asking both expository and speculative questions, operates in such a special type of communicative event that both types of questions and their answers are relevant to

herself as much as to the addressee. Expository questions can show the examiner that the student is able to structure argumentations, and speculative questions can show that she has grasped the complexity of the issue and she has a critical viewpoint towards it, even if she does not have a clear-cut answer because the topic is controversial.

The special conventions of student writing contribute to the fuzziness between answers relevant to the addresser and answers relevant to the addressee. This would explain why there are a few instances in which expository, speculative and rhetorical occurrences cannot be clearly distinguished, in particular in the English data.

The Italian data have only 8 questions altogether: 7 expository questions (I6-23-24, I6-81; I11-119-120; I11-197-198; I14-120; only one instance has a speculative overtone, I1-51-52 and one instance is an indirect expository question, I3-66-69). One question is reported from other texts (I2-62-63).

The English data are much richer in both tokens and types of questions. There are, for example, instances of questions which seem to be only speculative and sound rather informal. In one instance the student wonders:

E16-56 Am I being too negative here?

The student is commenting on her own writing anticipating a possible objection by the reader. The question constructs a dialogic relationship between addresser and addressee, but it is nevertheless speculative since she knows that nobody will actually answer her. The question is relevant in so far as it shows a critical stance by the student towards her own writing. There are also four instances of questions which are speculative but 'fictional', in other words the student reports the questions that a reader would ask him/herself while reading Jane Eyre and Tess.

These are therefore imaginary speculative questions which the student asks adopting the point of view of an imaginary reader:

E18-51-52 Why can't Tess find some happiness in the world?

E18-58-61 Why should Tess be haunted by one mistake and caused to pay for it throughout her life? This question plagues the reader throughout the novel

E18-100 Will Jane forever be alone?

E18-104 Will she resign herself to a life of subservience?

In the second occurrence the student explicitly says that she is adopting the reader's viewpoint (or what she believes the reader's viewpoint might be). This very occurrence is also the only case in which a speculative and a rhetorical question overlap. The implied answer is 'There is no reason why this should happen' which, once again, is presented as the imaginary reader's viewpoint. This occurrence brings forth the issue of rhetorical questions and their use in the scripts, which is the topic of the next section.

Summarising the findings for expository and speculative questions, it is possible to say that the English data contain both questions which are typical of argumentative prose and questions which are rather more common in informal text-types because they tend to create a fictional dialogue with the reader. The questions in the English data are more interactive and involve the participants to a larger extent than the instances found in the Italian data. Speculative questions are a way to convey the student's own thoughts, whereas the expository questions are the default type found in expository prose because they contribute to structure the propositional content. In this type of context, speculative questions might be said to score higher than the expository one on the involvement scale: the Italian students tend to avoid questions which highlight their voices or thoughts more than their discoursal choices.

10.2.2. Rhetorical questions

There seems to be agreement that a rhetorical question is a question that expects no answer; an informational question, on the other hand, usually expects an answer

even if there might be none, or none might be given. Quirk *et al.* (1985) argue that the answer to the rhetorical question is a foregone conclusion since it is actually implied in the question itself and it often has the force of a strong assertion.

This apparently straightforward definition is not always immediately clear in authentic texts and the criterion for distinguishing between informational questions with no answer, expository questions, speculative questions and rhetorical questions has usually been the intention of the addresser. Intentionality, however, is an uncertain ground to tread, as Frank (1990) points out in her study of rhetorical questions in conversation. Frank (1990) objects to the intentional approaches to rhetorical questions (Brown & Levinson, 1987; Italiano Anzilotti, 1982, among others) and argues for an analysis which takes into consideration the response of the hearer to the question and the wider context surrounding the utterance. Frank, therefore, advocates the necessity of combining Speech Act Theory and discourse analysis when investigating the communicative functions of rhetorical questions. Frank's solution, which she herself admits is not conclusive, cannot be applied to written texts in which there is no immediate feed-back from the addressee. However, even though the addressee's response is not a viable solution for most written text-types, Frank's suggestion that discourse analysis principles should be applied to the study of rhetorical questions is fundamental and has to be retained. In texts where there is no immediate feed-back on the part of the addressee, the context is criterial for identifying the type of question, since it often clarifies its use.

A cross-linguistic study which attempts a pragmatic analysis of questions is Italiano Anzilotti (1982). Italiano Anzilotti compares questions found in newspaper articles written in Italian and in English and uses the umbrella term 'rhetorical question' to discuss the illocutionary force of all questions which are not prototypically informational. This generalisation makes her discussion rather problematic, yet

some of her remarks yield interesting insights. She argues that the questions she analyses convey the writer's intention to persuade and therefore the deep structure of these questions is a declarative or an imperative performative verb. The questions in her data provide an emotional input on the part of the writer who tries to convince the reader and provides an indirect assessment of the topic. Furthermore, a question allows the writer to make a value judgement without substantiating it because no overt assertion is made: Stati (1982) calls this the 'pragmatic advantage' of the rhetorical question. Italiano Anzilotti concludes that 'rhetorical questions' recreate an oral discourse environment because their interpretation asks for some kind of agreement between writer and reader. As far as this last point is concerned, it seems to be a generalisation which cannot hold for all types of texts and non-informational questions. There are some expository questions or rhetorical questions which do not necessarily lower the level of formality, since they are rather more frequent in written expository prose than in more informal types of texts (Frank, 1990: 727; Renzi *et al.*, 1995: 113).

The uncertainty about drawing a line between rhetorical questions and other types of questions especially in written texts is, to a lesser extent than in Italiano Anzilotti, also a feature of other contributions in the field such as Stati (1982) and Renzi *et al.* (1995). Both studies define rhetorical questions in a more restricted way than Italiano Anzilotti, but they still do not draw a distinction, for instance, between rhetorical questions and speculative questions. Both studies, however, underline the relevant factor that the advantage of using a rhetorical question is the pragmatic fuzziness of the expression. In other words, the speech act is indirectly conveyed and this apparently gives leeway to the addressee to dissociate from it.

Brown & Levinson (1987) include rhetorical questions within their investigation of politeness and examine the advantages of using such an indirect speech act. Their

definition of rhetorical question is similar to Quirk *et al.*'s definition (1985). They only analyse spoken interaction and include the phenomenon in what they call 'off-record' strategies:

A communicative act is done off record if it is done in such a way that it is not possible to attribute only one clear communicative intention to the act. (Brown & Levinson, 1987: 211)

It is an indirect use of language which can contribute to avoiding overt conflict between participants. Brown & Levinson argue that speakers flout the Gricean Maxim of Quality by breaking sincerity conditions: they ask a question for which they have already an answer. As Frank (1990) remarks, this interpretation which sees rhetorical questions as a highly indirect politeness strategy, seems to be in contrast with Italiano Anzilotti's conclusion (rhetorical questions emphasise the writer's point) and Quirk *et al.*'s definition of this device as a means of making a forceful assertion. Frank's tentative explanation of this apparent contradiction is that rhetorical questions are such a complex phenomenon that their functions have not been clearly investigated yet. The purposes of using rhetorical questions and the contexts in which they are used are varied: whereas in some contexts they might strengthen the assertion, in others they might mitigate the effect of the utterance. In other words, the two conclusions are not contrasting, but complementary. Stati (1982) had already noticed and pointed out this apparent contradiction and ambiguity in the analysis of some Italian data and underlined that in all instances rhetorical questions contain an attitude towards the addressee (especially in spoken interaction). It could be added that they convey an attitude towards the propositional content as well, since, as Gobber (1988) remarks, this type of question is based on a judgement of the situation (*ibid.*: 153).

This brief overview of the literature shows the actual complexity of the topic. For the purpose of this study, I will look at the context in which the questions (rhetorical and non-rhetorical) appear in order to analyse the discoursal and

pragmatic functions of each occurrence. Hypotheses about the intention of the writer are inevitable, but they will be mitigated by the analysis of the wider textual environment in which the instances appear and the interaction between task, text-type, writer, reader.

In the present analysis, rhetorical questions are taken to be questions which do not need an answer because they already imply one. This implied answer can be a forceful statement (for which a paraphrase with *surely* is possible) or carry a different degree of conviction on the part of the writer and can also express hesitation and tentativeness. If rhetorical questions are analysed as being like a declarative plus a reversed polarity tag, then it becomes clear why rhetorical questions can be used for expressing different degrees of conviction in different contexts. The following is the transformation of the rhetorical question into a declarative plus question tag:

E3-83-85 Is this not as sophisticated an achievement as the mere representation of terror in prose writing which one could find in modern drama?

This is as sophisticated an achievement as the mere presentation of terror in prose writing which one could find in modern drama, is it not?

According to the context, the transformed sentence could imply a forceful statement (*it surely is*) or a tentative guess.

Additionally, there are instances of rhetorical questions which can be considered border-line or controversial cases. The data analysis shows that there are some instances which can be considered either rhetorical questions or expository questions. This mainly happens when the question is metadiscoursal, that is when there is a reference to it elsewhere in the text itself. Mauranen (1993) excluded rhetorical questions from metadiscourse because they imply an answer and therefore they are not usually referred to elsewhere in the text. This point is contradicted by Stati (1982) and Renzi *et al.* (1995) who recognise the possibility of finding a

rhetorical use of the sequence question and reply. As already noted (see 9.5.3.), in my English data there are instances where rhetorical questions are metadiscoursal because they are referred to somewhere else in the text. Five instances are also border-line cases with expository questions and four out of five occurrences are metadiscoursal (in the scripts all expository questions are metadiscoursal) (see Table 1 below). The Italian scripts do not contain any occurrence of rhetorical questions.

The following are examples of rhetorical questions from the English scripts:

E3-83-85 Is this not as sophisticated an achievement as the mere representation of terror in prose writing which one could find in modern drama? (the context confirms that the implied answer is a forceful positive statement)

E15-33-36 What could be more obviously designed to provoke a questioning of society than George Orwell's 1984? (the context confirms that the question implies a forceful negative statement)

The first case is one of the rare instances of metadiscoursal rhetorical questions since the student continues by elaborating on the statement implied by the question. Among the occurrences of rhetorical questions there are two instances which differ from the rest and stand out in this type of text. The first occurrence is extremely informal and colloquial (see Section 10.5.):

E12-36-39 One can argue that this is a sophisticated jump in conception, but I'll lay money down that one would be wrong - perhaps trying to cram the idea into an Essay (and what's wrong with that?). (the implied answer is a negative statement)

The meaning of the sentence is not entirely clear, but the rhetorical question is used as an informal type of evaluation. The other instance is the only border-line case between a rhetorical and a speculative question (E18-58-60).

The use of rhetorical questions in the scripts would confirm Frank's opinion that these questions are a complex device which expresses a forceful statement and therefore a conviction of the writer, but, at the same time, it differs from an overt statement to the same effect because the addresser chooses to go off-record (Brown

& Levinson, 1987) and therefore to use an indirect strategy to convey the force of the utterance.

10.2.3. Questions in the data

The table which follows shows the use of questions in the data. As explained in the previous section, there are some in-between cases which, in Table 1, occupy a middle position between two columns. Two occurrences which have an interrogative structure, but cannot be defined as questions, have been excluded from the count. It is the case of the following idiomatic expressions (included in metadiscourse):

E10-52 shall we say
E18-130 shall I say

The table reports the numbers of the examples in the data and shows whether the occurrences are also metadiscoursal (+M) or not. One example is underlined and repeated twice in the table: it is the only occurrence which is a border-line case between a rhetorical and a speculative question. One group of examples is marked with the specification (fictional): these are the questions referred to in the previous section. The abbreviation used are the following: RH Q (rhetorical question); EX Q (expository question); SP Q (speculative question); M (the question is metadiscoursal).

TABLE 1: The use of questions

TABLE 1A: The Italian data

RH Q	RH Q - EX Q	EX Q	EX Q - SP Q	SP Q
			I1-51-52 M	
		I6-23-24 M		
		I6-81 M		
		I11-119-120 M		
		I11-197-199 M		
		I14-20 M		
		I3-66-69 indirect M		
		6	1	
Question reported from other sources: I2-62-63				
TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONS IN ITALIAN: 8 mean per 100 words: 0.03 RH Q: rhetorical questions EX Q: expository questions SP Q: speculative questions M: metadiscoursal				

TABLE 1B: The English data

RH Q	RH Q - EX Q	EX Q	EX Q - SP Q	SP Q
E1-28-29				
E3-74-77 M		E3-65-69 M	E3-55-56 M	
	E8-9-10 M			
	E8-10-11 M			
E10-19-22 M				
	E11-63-66 M	E11-61-63 M		
		E11-72-77 M		
E12-39 (informal)				
		E13-61-64 M	E13-44-45	
E15-33-36				
		E13-61-64 M		
		E16-28-29 M	E16-43-44 M	E16-56 (informal)
		E17-36-37 M		
		E17-46-47 M		
				E18-51-52 (fiction)
<u>E18-58-60 M</u> > (fiction)				< <u>E18-58-60 M</u> (fiction)
				E18-100 (fiction)
				E18-104 (fiction)
		E20-11-13 M		
		E22-46-47 M		
			E23-21-23 (emphatic)	
			E23-21-25 (emphatic)	
			E23-21-25 (emphatic)	
			E23-21-25 (emphatic)	
		E24-14 M		
	E25-25-26 M			
5 + (1) RH Q	4 RH Q - EX Q	11 EX Q	7 EX Q - SP Q	4 + (1) SP Q
TOTAL NUMBER OF QUESTIONS IN ENGLISH: 32				
Mean per 100 words: 0.17				
RH Q: rhetorical questions				
EX Q: expository questions				
SP Q: speculative questions				
M: metadiscoursal				

The table shows that there are more questions in the English scripts and that they have a wider variety of functions in the text. The main function for the questions in the Italian scripts is expository and all questions (apart from the reported instance, which is intertextual, see Table 1A) are metadiscoursal, i.e. the student uses them to announce or prepare the following stretch of text.

Expository questions are the most frequent type of question in the English scripts and all the in-between cases are also expository (apart from example E18-58-60). Speculative questions (including or excluding the in-between cases) are more common than rhetorical questions. Two explanations can be put forward: first of all, students can get marks in essays for posing the right questions even if they cannot provide answers for them. Therefore the student may use questions to show that she has identified the main issues. A second possible explanation is based on the fact that the instances which have been identified as 'speculative' in the scripts tend to be either quite informal or they report a sort of 'writing-while-thinking' technique. The student has very little time to organise her writing while doing the actual writing up, therefore speculative questions and also the in-between cases seem to be reporting her own thinking while she is writing. In this respect, speculative questions tend to give the scripts a rather more informal tone than the expository questions or the rhetorical questions do: they openly express the student's thought processes while she is structuring the text.

Rhetorical questions are mainly used to emphasise the point the student wants to make but, as mentioned before, this technique is somewhat indirect, since the student does not openly state her opinion, but implies it in the question. The utterance is apparently infelicitous, therefore the reader is called to make inferences as to what the writer means: the answer can be clearly inferred, but never overtly stated. Rhetorical questions aim at persuading the reader by means of heavily

involving him/her in the construction of meaning (Fowler, 1981: 86). The student implies a forceful statement, but it is the addressee who infers it from the context. The addresser openly relies on the addressee for the construction of interpretation and therefore rhetorical questions are clearly interpersonal devices. Additionally, it can be noticed that all the borderline cases of rhetorical questions (4 are also expository and 1 is also speculative) are metadiscoursal, and 2 out of 5 cases of purely rhetorical questions are metadiscoursal (they are referred to elsewhere in the script).

As a last general remark, there are two occurrences (E12-39 and E16-56) which establish a direct, dialogical relationship with the reader and are both very informal. These two instances have been discussed in Section 10.2.2., here I would like to add that they are quite unusual in this type of writing and their presence in the script is, therefore, all the more noticeable and foregrounded. The two instances are similar to utterances commonly found either in colloquial spoken interactions or in personal letters, both highly personal and informal genres.

In conclusion, the analysis of questions in the English scripts shows that they are used in a variety of ways: some are more typical of expository prose, other instances are more informal and personal, highly dialogical and therefore highly interpersonal, since they convey the attitude of the addresser towards the propositional content and her overt recognition of the presence of an addressee. In the Italian scripts, instead, questions are mainly used to prepare the ground for the argumentation ahead, their function is directly linked to metadiscourse and the structuring of the text.

10.3. Intertextual voices

This section deals with linguistic devices which either overtly signal that the voice in the text is not the student's own or they signal a distancing of the addresser from the stretch of text and its meaning in context. The devices analysed here are quotation marks and attributors (open references to critics' points of view).

10.3.1. Quotation marks

Quotation marks are a flexible device which can be used for a series of different functions in texts. Here only the functions relevant to the data will be analysed. Quotation marks highlight the intertextuality of a passage, a phrase or a word. Intertextuality is a pervasive phenomenon in language and it relates texts belonging to different ages and genres:

Intertextuality is basically the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth. (Fairclough, 1992b: 84)

The label 'intertextuality' was used by Kristeva to express a concept derived from Bakhtin's work (Bakhtin 1981, 1986; Kristeva, 1986). Quotation marks are only one of the numerous devices revealing the presence of intertextuality, a multifarious linguistic phenomenon which is not always easily identifiable.

The phenomenon of intertextuality is widespread and crucially relevant in student writing: the students' texts are based on other texts which can be either written or spoken and are as diverse as books or articles of literary criticism, notes from lectures and seminars, discussions with lecturers or peers, talks, reference books, newspaper articles, and even the literary texts the student is studying. Some of these texts are more relevant than others and their influence can be pervasive (in particular notes from lectures and seminars, literary criticism). The analysis of intertextuality in student writing is a complex field of research which is beyond the

scope of the present study in that it impinges more on the ideational than on the interpersonal macrofunction (Section 3.4.1.). This section, therefore, will only deal with a very limited aspect of intertextuality.

Quotation marks are devices used by the writer to signal distancing between herself and the stretch of text delimited by quotation marks. In particular there are two main types of quotation mark: ordinary quotes which signal the citation of other people's words and scare quotes which involve a more subtle kind of distancing or dissociation from the words within quotation marks, as will be specified below. In both cases the writer warns the reader that the stretch of text within quotation marks has a status which is different from the rest of the text. This means that quotation marks can be considered an interpersonal device: the writer makes clear to the reader the distance between herself and what she is writing (Fairclough, 1992b: 119-120).

In the table below (Table 2) quotation marks are divided into the two main groups mentioned before: categories from 1 to 5 include ordinary marks, that is 'voices' from other texts or from people other than the writer; categories from 6 to 11 include scare quotes, that is marks which signal other types of dissociation between the writer and her writing.

Table 2 shows the occurrence of quotation marks in the data.

TABLE 2: Quotation marks

ORDINARY QUOTES	ENGLISH	ITALIAN
1. quoting from the essay title	44	8
2. quoting from literary works	20	44
3. quoting from works of literary criticism	11	15
4. quoting from other sources:		
4a. news	1	0
4b. a specific cultural context	0	8
5. reporting what a reader of the literary work might think	4	0
SCARE QUOTES	ENGLISH	ITALIAN
6. label usually accepted for this concept	8	43
7. the term is used in a way peculiar to the context	2	8
8. the term is not exactly suitable: it approximately conveys the meaning	13	8
9. the term has to be interpreted metaphorically	8	7
10. deviant collocation	1	0
11. neologism	0	1
(12. emphasis)	(1)	(0)
TOTAL	113	142
frequency per 100 words	0.63%	0.66%

Since the occurrences have been counted focusing on their dominant function in context, the table shows a necessarily simplified picture of the actual situation. The majority of instances are clear-cut occurrences, others have a dominant function in the context, but are related to other functions and overlap with them, creating links between different voices in the script and, in some cases, blurring their source. This is a more noticeable phenomenon in the Italian scripts where the use of quotation marks seems to be more heavily influenced by the shared knowledge between the

addresser and the addressee. This concept will be better explained in the analysis of the data.

The occurrence of category 12 is enclosed in brackets because it is an idiosyncratic use of quotation marks for emphasis which is not commonly accepted in more formal writing. The occurrence emphasises the word in contrast with another:

E16-79-81 For literature to be socially effective then it must change the 'whole' of society. < instead of part of society >

The first group of occurrences (1-5) report stretches of texts belonging to voices other than the student's own. The difference between the English and the Italian data is probably due to the fact that the English essay titles have a long quotation reported in quotation marks. Whereas the Italian essay-title reports a well-known controversy in literary criticism expressed in a generic way: the voice can be the lecturer's or the literary critic's. In the English scripts, therefore, there is a certain overlapping between categories 1, 2 and, in some cases, 6 (as will be mentioned later).

Categories 4 and 5 of this first group are quite different in English and in Italian. Category 5 only has 4 instances in English and they report reactions of imaginary readers of literary works, in what can be called fictional quotations. The English student identifies with a reader of literary works rather than with a critic, this would tie in with the use of person markers and evaluation strategies (see Chapters 5 and 8).

The English instance of category 4 is an interesting example of quotation within a quotation: the student reports a passage of the radio news which quotes Orwell; the

passage has an anecdotal tone even if it is used as an example to back up the argumentation:

E17-60-63 [...] the BBC journalist pondered up on < sic > the question of how long it would be before the Ethiopian people 'discovered that some pigs are more equal than others'.

In the Italian scripts, sources are literary works, literary criticism or, in the case of category 4, words and expressions used in the particular context the student is writing about. Speaking of Italy at the end of Risorgimento, one student remarks:

I13-26-27 Mancava quindi una vera 'gloria' nazionale, cosa che gli altri paesi europei [...] avevano conseguito.

A real national 'glory' was lacking, this was a thing that the other European countries had obtained.

The student reports a word which was probably used at that time for the concept she is expressing. The voice reported is external to the student's world and merges with other reported voices of literary critics.

Categories from 6 to 11 differ from the previous ones in that they do not necessarily report other clearly identifiable 'voices', but they can signal the special status of the word or stretch of text in that specific context. In fact, category 6 can be used to report an external voice without explicitly stating so: scare quotes are used to highlight the fact that the term is the accepted label for the concept, in other words, the scare quotes mean 'so called':

E7-45 The works of authors of the 'Beat generation' [...]

By using the scare quotes, the student points out that there is a well established use behind the terminology she uses, in so doing she adds authority to her writing and lessens her own responsibility. In the Italian scripts in particular, this category is very close to quoting from literary criticism (category 3) because the terminology in scare quotes tends to belong to literary criticism:

17-83-86 [...] allora gli scapigliati potrebbero fornirci l'anello di congiunzione a conferma dell'esistenza, più o meno latente, di una 'melanconia romantica' o di una 'malattia decadente' che sottostà a tutti i tempi.
 [...] then the scapigliati could be the link which confirms the existence, more or less in potential, of a 'romantic melancholy' or a 'decadent illness' which underlie all times.

The original Italian wording of the example above shows that this category is a way to insert in the text specific literary terminology without acknowledging its source. The overall impression created by this frequently used device is that the student is using authoritative sources which do not even need to be acknowledged either because they are widely accepted or because they are shared knowledge between the participants in the communicative event. Weaving these intertextual references into her own text offers the student the opportunity to indirectly increase the authority of what she is saying or, at the very least, to render the passage more factual, less impressionistic. The student signals that the expression is not her own and its actual source can be inferred by the addressee without further specification. This use of quotation marks is so widespread throughout the scripts that the relevance of shared knowledge between writer and reader cannot go unnoticed.

The English students insert external authoritative voices signalling them with the use of quotation marks as well as the Italian students (categories 1, 2, 3, 6), the difference, however, lies in the more overtly recognisable source of the voices quoted. In the English scripts the source of the intertextual passage or word is either overtly acknowledged, or clear from the context. Only a few occurrences (mainly the 8 instances of category 6) have an uncertain source which is usually (but not always) inferred to be literary criticism.

Some categories can be considered similar or overlapping at some point: categories 7, 8, 9 warn the reader that the term or the phrase cannot be interpreted literally. In 2 cases the expression takes up a special meaning in that context. In English 13 instances (category 8) are hedging devices which signal to the reader that the writer

could not find a better word to express herself, but what she chose is only approximately suitable:

E14-68-70 In James Joyce's Dubliners the stories may be enjoyed both as 'slices of life' of the citizens of Dublin and also [...]

The terms that have to be interpreted metaphorically rather than literally are in category 9 (8 instances):

E22-62-63 He takes a contemporary social issue, that of the McCarthy anti-communism 'witch-hunt' [...]

The second occurrence could be also considered a border-line case between categories 6 and 9, since this is a fairly common way to refer to the political situation of the time. Occurrences have been categorised as number 9 only if they are not well established and known metaphors in the literary field, in this case they would have been listed under category 6 or 3. Here is an example of category 9:

I13-151-152 Alla fin fine non riescono a staccarsi dal 'cordone ombelicale romantico' [...]

At the end, they cannot detach themselves from the 'romantic umbilical chord' [...]

Category 10 has only one fairly unusual occurrence in which the student reports the deviant collocation used by Joyce: '*perverted commas*' (E12-78) instead of 'inverted commas'. In this case scare quotes are used both because it is a deviant collocation and because the student is reporting a writer's words.

Summarising the findings about the use of quotation marks in the scripts, the qualitative analysis of the occurrences has shown that both sets of scripts mainly contain voices belonging to literature or literary criticism, but in Italian this is foregrounded by the lack of voices other than literary ones. Additionally, in the Italian scripts, terminology used in literary criticism (category 6), and also quotations from literary works and literary criticism are not always overtly acknowledged as such: the underlying assumption seems to be that the addressee will recognise the literary or critical source. In the use of quotation marks the

Italian scripts rely on a more wide-ranging use of shared knowledge between addresser and addressee. In this way, however, the student constructs in her script a web of intertextual references which indirectly assumes common understanding of the issues and gives the text a more authoritative tone.

10.3.2. Attributors

'Attributors' is a label used by Vande Kopple (1985), Crismore & Farnsworth (1990), Crismore *et al.* (1993) in their analysis of metadiscourse. The more restricted definition of metadiscourse used in the present study (reflexive instances of language) rules attributors out of metadiscourse (Section 9.2.). The concept of 'attributor', that is another voice overtly inserted in the text and acknowledged as such, is inherently intertextual, not reflexive.

In the present study the label 'attributor' is used rather restrictively since the analysis focuses on the overt appeal made by the students to the authority of literary critics. Recourse to an external authority can contribute to constructing the relation between addresser, addressee and communicative event. The voice of external authorities in the field can be more or less present according to the need the students have to be supported in their argumentation. In this perspective, the present study has ignored another category used by Vande Kopple (1985), namely 'narrators'. 'Narrators' have an opinion about the propositional content, but they are not authorities in the field: '*according to James, Mrs Wilson announced that*' (Vande Kopple, 1985: 84).

Given these premises, 'attributor' has been taken to mean all overt references to critics of literature or literary writers who wrote about the topic as critics. The label has been retained even though it is not entirely satisfactory: it does not make

explicit that it is the student who 'attributes' some comments to external authoritative voices and focuses the attention on the reported voice.

The scripts were written in exam conditions (that is in a situation in which the student could not check her sources), therefore vague, non-specific references to critics have been counted alongside instances accurately quoted by heart. 'Attributors' are all the overtly intertextual references to critics, their work, the wording they used referring to the propositional content the student is dealing with.

Here are some examples of attributors (in the first example Beckett is reported as a critic rather than as a literary writer):

E6-1 Samuel Beckett stated 'form is content, content form' [...]

I1-63 Natalino Sapegno parla di 'una esigenza di novità' [...]

Natalino Sapegno speaks of 'necessity for novelty' [...]

I3-146-147 Altri critici hanno voluto vedere nella Scapigliatura una proiezione verso il futuro [...]

Other critics wanted to see in Scapigliatura a projection towards the future [...]

The overall number of attributors is only 8 in the English scripts and 46 in the Italian scripts. This discrepancy in occurrences ties in with the analysis of quotation marks and the attempt of the Italian students to use authoritative voices in their scripts in order to support their point and their argumentation: it seems as if they have to show explicit knowledge of their sources. It is worth noticing that after passing their written examination, the Italian students are orally tested on the syllabus of the course. This means that they can show their knowledge about literary criticism in the oral examination. This fact, however, does not deter the Italian student writers from referring to their sources in the written examination more frequently than the English students.

10.4. The voice set aside: brackets in the scripts

This section will deal with occurrences which are not intrinsically interpersonal, but they can acquire an overt interpersonal function by establishing a direct relationship between the participants in the communicative event and, in some instances, by personalising the writing.

The use of brackets as punctuation cannot be always distinguished from the parenthetical use of commas. The following points categorise the main functions of brackets in the scripts; as in quotation marks, the functions at times overlap.

1. Brackets contain additional information about the subject:

E11-67-72 This question is the central focus of all of Joyce's work, especially A Portrait and Dubliners; they trace the journey of the modern man from the constraining but securing Fate (of Church, nationalism, family, etc.) towards the liberating (but equally alienating) choice which modern humanity must face.

I13-93-98 Poi i grossi esempi < sic > ci vengono dalla Francia, dove era già maturata, anticipatamente (per ragioni storiche analoghe alle nostre) una cerchia di intellettuali [...]

Then the big examples come to us from France where a circle of intellectuals had previously formed (for historical reasons) [...]

2. They specify or exemplify in detail what has already been said generically (e.g. or i.e. could be added):

E11-28 [...] classical allusions (Homer, Virgil, Milton) [...]

E11-93 Metaphysical poets (Donne, Marvell, etc.) [...]

I7-57-59 Ecco quindi il lamento di un Praga (La strada ferrata) di un Boito (Case nuove) [...]

Here is then the lament by Praga (La Strada ferrata), by Boito (Case nuove) [...]

3. They can contain an explanation of what precedes (i.e. could be added):

E11-85 [...] 'primitive' (earlier) literature is still not merely content without form.

I13-126-128 [...] avvertono la coscienza di 'vivere la vita', (non camparla come facevano i borghesi) [...]

[...] they are conscious of 'living life fully', (not just surviving as middle-class people did) [...]

4. They can contain a remark in which the writer anticipates a possible criticism and adds a qualification to what she has just said:

E19-54 Dickens did not have blatant designs upon his readers. He knew that many of them (if not most), like Esther and Alan Woodcart in Bleak House would return to their cosy little existences.

TABLE 3: Use of brackets

category	1	2	3	4	total	%
English scripts	19	15	4	7	45	0.25
Italian scripts	30	19	4	2	55	0.25

The English scripts contain a few highly interactive and interpersonal occurrences which, however limited in their number, are foregrounded because rather unexpected in this type of writing. These occurrences lower the level of impersonality and formality of the text and insert the voice of the student in the scripts. These instances (E12-4; E12-19-20; E12-22-23; E12-39; E23-27) only belong to 2 scripts, nevertheless, their presence is worth mentioning because nothing of this kind can be found in the Italian scripts.

In the first example the student is not sure of the spelling of a word and conveys this uncertainty to the reader by means of punctuation in brackets:

E23-27 Metamorphis (!?)

The punctuation in brackets is used as a direct message of the writer which anticipates an objection of the reader, establishing a direct relationship between the two participants.

In the same script there is an instance in which the brackets signal an anticipation of criticism expressed in an informal way:

E23-40-41 Malamud wrote this [as] a young(ish) man [...]

The brackets try to render what in spoken English would be expressed by intonation and means 'let us say', 'rather young, but not very young'; brackets here are a hedging device which attenuates the meaning of the adjective.

Script E12 is rich with brackets and some establish a direct and dialogical relationship between participants:

E12-4-5 In the course I have studied (unsuccessfully) this year, I certainly do not feel the statement is relevant.

The brackets contain personal information about the student herself, as if she were trying to anticipate the comment of her own lecturer about the word 'studied'. This is one of the most personalised instances that can be found in the scripts, since here the student writer refers to the relationship learner/teacher which exists between the main participants to the communicative event.

In the same script, the student remarks in brackets:

E12-39 (and what's wrong with that?)

As mentioned before, this rhetorical question is informal and dialogical. Another personal comment, almost an ironic aside of the student writer, is the following remark about a critic's use of complex language:

E12-22-23 (deliberate, I hope)

What is remarkable in these instances is that the voice of the student writer is directly inserted in the text to establish a personal link with the addressee.

10.5. Concluding remarks

This chapter has dealt with some of the devices which overtly reveal the presence of 'voices' in the text, connect the texts to their discoursal level and are therefore complementary to metadiscourse (which links the texts to themselves). The 'voices'

in the texts are mainly of two kind: the writer's voice overtly revealed (questions, quotation marks, brackets), external voices brought into the text (attributors, quotation marks). In some instances the two types of voice are closely related and interlinked (especially in quotation marks).

Only a few devices have been analysed: several other phenomena are present but they are either too diffuse in the text to be pin-pointed or they cannot be analysed in both languages (orthographic devices such as underlining or capital letters; the emphatic markers rendered with the auxiliary in English; exclamatory sentences).

Some general conclusions can be drawn from the data analysed in this chapter. The English scripts seem to be a complex mixture of conventions used in argumentative prose and scholarly writing, and devices borrowed from other types of text which are more personalised and interpersonal, such as colloquial and informal communicative exchanges. The personality of the writer appears many times through speculative and rhetorical questions, colloquial asides and even (if rarely) direct addresses to the reader. The student's voice peers through the text and is related both to her discourse role as writer of a piece of argumentative writing in a gate-keeping encounter and, less frequently, to her social role as learner and as individual in her own social and academic context.

In the Italian scripts the discourse role of the student is by far the most relevant. Her social role as learner and individual are effaced and her own individual voice is backgrounded and often interlinked with voices external to the text. Her voice and choices are clearly and overtly made when they are metadiscoursal, that is when they are focused on the textual and argumentative choices. Her own voice is backgrounded when choices deal with the propositional content and the relationship between herself and the addressee. Attitudes about the propositional content are

usually backed up by an authoritative and external viewpoint, or expressed as factual, 'objective', apparently uncontroversial facts.

CHAPTER 11

RHETORICAL PROMINENCE: BRINGING OUT THE MAIN POINT

11.1. Definition of rhetorical structure

The way in which texts are organised in textual patterns, whereby sections of texts are linked together, can be analysed from different viewpoints. In particular, it is possible to focus on a more cognitive approach either examining the text in its composition process and from the writer's viewpoint, or examining the text from the reader's viewpoint (reader's response). Alternatively, the focus is on the text itself and the analysis is based on its deep or surface structures. This study looks at some aspects of the surface structure of texts and their rhetorical effects by relating them to the wider context in which the texts were produced. The linguistic structures are viewed here as strictly linked to the context of production: the type of participants, the choice of text-type, the type of communicative event and its purpose. The focus will be on the product (the students' scripts), but the approach will also take into account the process (context, purpose) which brought it into being.

Whereas the word 'structure' is often used to define syntactic elements of discourse, here it is used in the broader meaning of linguistic features which, in form and content, contribute to the overall organisation of a text and its discoursal sub-units. In this chapter, 'text structure' comprises semantic and functional aspects viewed from a discourse perspective and relating it to the rhetorical level of the texts. 'Rhetorical level' consists of the discoursal patterns above the level of the sentence used by the writer to achieve her communicative goal and produce an effect on the reader.

Rhetorical structures can be regarded as core features of the textual metafunction, that is the function which mainly relates to the way in which information is packaged in the text. However, the textual choices are informed by the relationship between the participants and the context of communication. In a cross-linguistic study, text structures can contribute to revealing the respective positioning of writer and reader in the two different languages and sets of data. Text structures can be considered to be the interface between the textual and the interpersonal metafunctions. The ideational metafunction, on the other hand, informs the logical development of ideas conveyed by the writer and therefore the analysis will have to take into account the propositional content of the scripts as well.

Van Dijk (1980) uses the term 'superstructures' for 'the semantic form that organises the global meaning of a text' (ibid.: 108). These forms of organisation become conventionalised in a given culture and 'may lead to the establishment of fixed schemata for the global content of a discourse' (ibid.: 108). A well-known superstructure, for example, is that of argumentation. Superstructures have a functional character because they define the functional relations between the macro-propositions of a specific text and therefore influence the sequence and nature of macrostructures in the given text. Van Dijk argues that superstructures, such as argumentative texts, have a cross-linguistic specificity: their textual outcome is comparable, but they are encoded in different ways in different languages.

Text structures are the backbone to the text development and contribute to the effectiveness of the text message. Their global rhetorical effect has the text as basic unit, but it is possible to distinguish more local strategies which contribute to the overall effect. The aim of this chapter is to offer a cross-linguistic description and interpretation of some of these strategies. In particular the chapter will focus on the sections of the text which relate to the main point made by the students in their text.

The writer usually gives linguistic prominence to these sections by using a series of devices which will be analysed in the chapter and compared cross-linguistically.

The chapter starts with a survey of some descriptive approaches of the analysis of text structures which constitute the background for the analysis used in the present study. The first section summarises some characteristics of the text-type, then three approaches to text structures are discussed: clause relational analysis, Rhetorical Structure Theory and genre analysis. At the end, the approach followed in this study is presented, the hypothesis is set and the data are analysed and interpreted.

11.2. Expository and argumentative texts

In Chapter 3 student writing in its different text-types has been defined, described and related to registers and genres which influence or inform it. Using Swales's description of genre (1990), university student writing has been defined for the purpose of this study as an umbrella term which includes several text-types (essays, examination scripts, dissertations, etc.). These are heterogeneous pieces of discourse which are characterised by developmental features and are attempting to approximate to the argumentative prose of academic discourse. Student writing is strongly influenced by discourse produced by fully-fledged members of the academic community, namely lecturers and scholars: academic prose, lecture notes, personal communications. However, the model for the students' written production is certainly scholarly prose, even though the variables of author, audience, goal, etc. are quite different from those of scholarly writing (see Chapter 3).

The text-type analysed here, examination scripts, can be considered a variety of argumentative prose. Argumentative prose is a wide and diversified area of study which has prompted a variety of research aims and a vast literature. Here I will only mention the studies which are relevant for the present purpose.

Argumentative prose has been alternatively considered as a type of expository prose or as a distinct genre altogether. In his taxonomic study of expository prose, Mosenthal (1985), drawing on the work of Brewer, de Beaugrande and Spiro, argues:

The content of expository text tends to be definitions or descriptions of events and states in time and space. The purpose of expository text is to update a person's knowledge about some event or state in space and time (Mosenthal, 1985: 388).

Mosenthal specifies that the structure of expository texts tends to be thematic and to consist of hierarchically ordered information. He identifies an expository discourse continuum formed by 6 categories which range from simple descriptions (called 'records') to 'speculative' and 'theoretical' varieties which include argumentative types of writing (even though the term 'argumentative' is not used by Mosenthal).

In Grabe's (1987) quantitative study aimed at defining textual characteristics of expository texts and at testing the hypothesis that there is a genre that can be labelled 'expository prose', there seems to be no clear difference between argumentative types of writing (included in the texts analysed) and some expository texts. Grabe's conclusions are that there is indeed an identifiable genre called 'expository prose' and that sub-types can be distinguished within it. Judging from Grabe's cluster analysis, some of the sub-genres are argumentative text-types even though he never explicitly says so.

In a more pedagogical perspective, Martin (1985) offers a simplified and less theoretical analysis of 'factual writing', a label which seems to cover the categories discussed by Mosenthal (1985) and Grabe (1987). Martin, however, uses the term 'expository' to refer only to a sub-type of factual writing and introduces the concept of 'argument':

In Exposition, more than one argument is presented in favour of a judgement. We will refer to the judgement in Exposition as a THESIS, and to the reasons supporting it as ARGUMENTS. (Martin, 1985: 14)

As will be shown in what follows, the binary division into thesis and argument seems to be a common feature of different studies on expository prose (see Van Dijk, 1980; Meyer, 1985; Hoey, 1983; van Eemeren *et al.*, 1987; Mortara Garavelli, 1988; Lo Cascio, 1991; Romani, 1992, among others) and makes Martin's definition close to Kopperschmidt's definition of 'argument':

the term 'argument' is understood to mean the use of a statement in a logical process of argumentation to support or weaken another statement whose validity is questionable or contentious. (Kopperschmidt, 1985: 159).

Argumentative prose, therefore, seems to be, for some scholars, a category of expository prose. For example Martin's 'exposition' is argumentative even though he does not use the latter label.

This brief overview shows that the labels 'expository' and 'argumentative' are controversial terms used in a variety of ways. The present study adopts the view reported in Romani (1992: 18-20): Romani speaks of '*l'area presentativa*' and '*l'area argomentativa*'. Acknowledging that this concept can be traced back to Weinrich and Benveniste, he divides text-types into 'presentativi', texts whose functions are mainly those of narrating and describing, and 'argomentativi', a wide range of texts which share the relevance of the conative function and the presence of a controversial thesis to be analysed (*ibid.*: 21-39). Romani seems to separate the two areas in a clear-cut way. In actual fact, exposition (which he categorises as a form of description and therefore comes under the 'presentative' label) can be extremely close to certain types of argumentation, as shown in the studies by Grabe (1987), Mosenthal (1985), Biber (1988: 192-195). Rather than falling into separate categories, text-types form a continuum which ranges from narration to texts which are strictly argumentative (see Biber, 1988 and final section of this chapter).

11.2.1. Argumentative prose in the scripts

As the data analysis will show, the students' texts analysed here are mainly argumentative texts which may contain features of descriptive or expository writing. This point will be broached and explained in the sections dealing with the discussion on the data analysis. The text-type belongs to argumentation because the student writer is given a cue (examination task) from which the main thesis (or theses) of the script derives. In order to discuss this main point or thesis the student uses a series of arguments which lead to the expression of an opinion overtly or covertly stated. The different ways in which this complex series of linguistic acts is performed is the topic of this chapter.

The students' purpose in writing their piece of argumentative prose has been analysed in detail in Chapter 3. Examination scripts are texts produced in a gatekeeping encounter where the audience addressed (discourse role) has various social roles in the academic community: scholars, teachers, but more to the point for this communicative event, examiners. The student writers, on the other hand, have their main social role as candidates whose main aim is to pass the exam, but they are also learners and apprentices in the academic community who try to adopt conventions used in literary criticism (see Section 3.4.4.2.).

The argumentative prose of an examination script, therefore, has one main purpose: to convince the reader/examiner that the writer/candidate is able to construct a plausible, well-informed and well-developed piece of argumentation in support of a thesis which is based on a given topic. The student writer does not usually write anything that is new to the reader, the consequence is that the reader reads mainly to evaluate, not to be informed. The focus of the reading process, therefore, is not on the interest in the argumentation *per se*, but on the ability of the student to show her knowledge of the various standard arguments which support (or weaken) the thesis

under discussion and to assemble them coherently and persuasively. It is precisely the fact that examination tasks are statements of known patterns of argumentation that makes such texts border-line between argumentative texts and descriptive or expository texts.

This point is also related to the main hypothesis of this chapter: looking at the findings of the previous chapters and the literature about argumentation in English and in Italian, it is reasonable to hypothesise that English scripts are more overtly 'argumentative' whereas the Italian scripts are more covertly so. In other words, it is hypothesised that the English scripts have a clearly stated thesis which is overtly argued for in the body of the script, the Italian students, instead, have a more indirect and covert way of putting forward their point.

As for other linguistic aspects mentioned in previous chapters (in particular modality and connectives), Mitchell (1996) argues that it is possible to establish a relationship between Lyons' scale of abstraction and modes of discourse (Lyons, 1977: 442-443). Argumentative texts deal with the logical relations between abstract propositions (third order entities), narratives tend to deal with temporal and causal relations between events and processes (second order entities) and descriptions with spatial relations between physical objects (first order entities). It is possible to argue that expository prose (as defined by Mosenthal, 1985: 388, quoted in Section 11.2.) tends to occupy a middle position between argumentative and narrative. Whereas in theory the modes of discourse can be related to the semantic levels on the scale of abstraction, in naturally occurring data categorisation is more complex: texts tend to form a continuum of modes of discourse and may tap into one or more levels of abstraction (see final section of this chapter).

In the sections which follow, some basic approaches to text structure are discussed, then the approach to data analysis used in the present study is presented.

11.3. Argumentation theory and the art of rhetoric

Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1995) give the following definition of argumentation:

Argumentation is a verbal activity aimed at obtaining a reasonable judge's agreement with a standpoint by presenting him/her with a set of propositions to support it. (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1995: 55)

Argumentation theory has a long tradition and vast literature. Among the most seminal studies in the field there are the contributions of Toulmin (1958) and Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (French edition: 1958; English edition: 1969). Recently these fundamental studies have been criticised for relying too heavily on formal, syllogistic logic (Van Eemeren & Grootendorst, 1995).

Argumentation theory, as developed by Toulmin and Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca, is based on the principles of logic elaborated by Aristotle and the principles of rhetoric as described by Cicero and Quintilian. In her *Manuale di retorica*, Mortara Garavelli (1988) notices that classical rhetoric has informed argumentative texts throughout the ages (in Western culture) and its tenets can still be found at the basis of texts as different as school essays, scientific articles and even narration (ibid.: 73). This common root in classical rhetoric would explain the composite nature of many naturally occurring texts (as mentioned in the previous section).

11.3.1. Pragma-dialectics and the concept of main point

In order to widen the scope of argumentation theory and apply it to actual instances of verbal interaction, Van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992) use a pragma-dialectical approach. Their study of argumentation is not limited to formal dialogues but it 'covers all speech acts performed at all stages of discourse aimed at resolving

a difference of opinion' (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1995: 57). In other words they analyse persuasive discourse by looking at its structure and adopting the view that there is a standpoint (or thesis in more traditional terms) expressed and defended by the addresser in the argumentative text. The concept of standpoint can be related to the idea of main point, as analysed in this chapter. Pragma-dialectics has the advantage of applying principles of communication theories to the study of argumentation (pragmatics). However, so far it has not established a clear relation between linguistic devices and the interpretation of texts and their structures. Another shortcoming of pragma-dialectics is that it does not clearly link the actual context of production to the interpretation and analysis of texts. As Kienpointer (1987: 287) highlights, argumentation is a pragmatic phenomenon and the argumentative schemes and usage conventions belong to a specific speech community.

The sections that follow introduce studies which have analysed text structure in context by means of linguistic tools.

11.4. Clause relational analysis

Clause relational analysis offers a model of text organisation which is general enough for a wide variety of text-types. It is based on the work of Winter (1977) on clause relations and it has been developed by Hoey (1979, 1983, 1986, 1991, 1994) as a useful and flexible tool of text patterning. The approach has been devised for the analysis of the surface linguistic patterns in natural data, and it relies on the identification of linguistic devices which reveal the overall organisation of the text. As Hoey points out (1991: 29), his approach is focused on patterns of semantic organisation in the texts (Halliday and Hasan, 1976 and Halliday, 1985) rather than 'structures' (considered by Hoey characteristic of syntax). Mauranen (1993), however, remarks that if the term 'structure' is 'allowed to refer to predictable

regularities in the organisation of elements, then it is possible to talk about structures in text' (ibid.: 196). In the present study, the label 'text structure' is used not in the syntactic meaning, but it rather refers to functional relations among linguistic elements found in text patterns (see also Mauranen, 1993).

In Hoey's work, the units of analysis are the clause and the whole text. The main tenets of this approach are summarised in the following points:

- The analysis is semantic and functional.
- The basic unit is the clause, but the relations linking clauses are similar to the ones linking wider sections of texts.
- There is a hierarchy in the way in which relations are established in the text which is taken as a unit: relations come in layers according to the dimension of the sub-unit examined, clauses are the basic units. Hierarchy, however, does not mean here that some relations are more important than others, it is rather a matter of detail of analysis.
- The text, its propositional content and its linguistic realisations are the main unit of analysis. The functions of stretches of text cannot be analysed in abstract terms but only in relation to each other and to the whole text.
- Functions and relations can be identified looking at linguistic clues and strategies, in particular what Winter defines as 'vocabulary 1, 2 and 3' (respectively subordinators, conjuncts and lexical signals; Winter, 1977; Hoey, 1979, 1983) and also predictable text patterns (Hoey, 1986). This is a fundamental point in the model of analysis because these linguistic indicators (which are an open set because of Vocabulary 3) are a way of connecting the analysis to the text itself, avoiding too heavy a reliance on the analyst's intuitions.
- Each function can be identified by projecting the discourse into a question-answer dialogue.

- Functions and relations form identifiable patterns in text-types. Among others, Hoey analyses the Problem-Solution discourse pattern and the Hypothetical-Real discourse pattern (1983, 1986, 1994). The former label is self-explanatory. The latter identifies a pattern in which a hypothetical claim is made (usually by other than the author), a denial of the hypothesis and a correction by the author follow.

The present study adopts from Hoey's approach the aspects that follow.

- The text as unit of analysis.
- The idea of linguistic indicators of functions and relations in the text. In the present study, the linguistic indicators have been chosen according to the specificity of the text-type and the area investigated (the main point of the script).
- The functions can be identified by asking the relevant question they answer: the main point includes (overtly or covertly) the 'main question' of the script.
- The Problem-Solution pattern is most relevant for the text-type analysed in the present study: the main point in the script can be considered a summary of the Solution to the Problem the script deals with. The Hypothetical-Real pattern can be identified as argumentative, but it seems to be less central to the text-type of the data because the students do not necessarily present a hypothesis from other sources and then deny it.

As far as this last point is concerned, it is interesting to notice how the binary relationship between stretches of texts is at the basis of Hoey's approach: not only is clause relation a cognitive link between two parts of the same text, but also the type of patterning is defined in a binary way. This is reminiscent of other studies which view text patterning from very different perspectives, but present this basic element in common: Grimes (1975) Van Dijk (1980); Meyer (1985); Martin (1985). As will be shown later, Rhetorical Structure Theory is also based on binary relations between sections of text. Speaking about the Problem-Solution pattern, Hoey (1994:

27) remarks that several linguists before him have identified a similar pattern in texts tracing its origin in the work by Beardsley (1950). In fact even in classical rhetoric it is possible to identify the core sections of persuasive discourse as the binary relation of *narratio* and *argumentatio* (Mortara Garavelli, 1988: 63; Lo Cascio, 1991: 55).

As far as the dialogic characteristic of texts is concerned, the model proposed by Hoey (1983) suggests that written monological texts can be projected into dialogue in order to clarify their discoursal organisation: questions can elicit answers found at in clauses or higher level sections in the text. Projecting written monologue into dialogue, Hoey exploits the dialogic quality which is intrinsic in all texts and relates to the interaction between addresser and addressee. Even an apparently monologic text-type like a student's essay is based on an intrinsic dialogic characteristic, as Van Peer (1990) explains:

Textual communication of this kind requires particular forms of social knowledge shared by participants (readers and writers) that must be firmly anchored in culture at large. The shared knowledge bears on rules, conventions, and procedures, as well as on the social rationale of the enterprise. [...] In other words, the dialogic nature of the essay rests on the reader's and writer's shared objective in putting their knowledge to test, thereby creating a tacit alliance between them. (Van Peer, 1990: 200)

Writing manuals often use this dialogic quality of text, suggesting the student should formulate the main questions the essay will try to answer before writing (Fabb & Durant, 1993; Ellis & Hopkins, 1985; Serafini, 1985).

The dialogic quality of texts is all the more relevant for the text-type of the data because the examination task itself is overtly or covertly a 'question' that the examiner asks the candidate. The 'question', however not prototypical, requires a response (see Lyons, 1977: 755; Blakemore, 1992: 114-116; Section 10.2.; Appendix 1). The examination task, therefore provides a prompt to identify what I

will call 'main question' of each script. This way of proceeding (better explained in the analysis of data) also overcomes the objection by Mauranen (1993) to Hoey's use of *ad hoc* questions and lack of an explicit system for formulating questions.

In conclusion, Hoey's approach has several advantages: it offers a fairly flexible method of analysis which can span across languages, since it takes into account possible cultural variations (the texts analysed in his works, however, are all from English); it refers to the reading process as fundamental in text interpretation; it is based on the analysis of a wide variety of text-types; it has a mainly linguistic focus and therefore it investigates the linguistic indicators of text organisation.

A drawback of this approach for a cross-linguistic study is the postulation of a finite number of clause relations, which is a limitation when dealing with different cultures. In a later study, Hoey (1986) seems to acknowledge the complexity of mapping clause relations and introduces an element of fuzziness between patterns which had not been highlighted in his previous work (1979, 1983).

11.5. Rhetorical Structure Theory

Rhetorical Structure Theory (RST from now on) has been developed by Mann and Thompson in the context of designing computer programmes for text generation and has therefore both a constructive and an analytical potential. The articles referred to below are all related to the latter use. Given this background, the model has been devised to be applicable across languages as an analytical tool to 'describe the relations between text parts in functional terms' (Mann & Thompson, 1988: 243). The fundamental tenets of this model can be summarised in the points that follow.

- RST views texts as hierarchical patterns in which local structures are combined in higher levels of organisation; the categories of relations used for local and global patterns are the same.

- Text is viewed as a hierarchical construction also because the model is based on a binary model of relation: two sections of text are related, but one (the 'nucleus') is usually more relevant to the writer's goal than the other (the 'satellite'). The model, therefore, aims at describing the focus given to the text by the writer:

Nuclearity is [...] an expressive resource that directs the reader to respond to the text in a particular and locally structured way. It seems to strongly influence the overall response that the writer intended. (ibid.: 271)

- The model is functional because the relations are based on the assessed goals of the writer.
- It is a bottom-up approach to text structures which aims at describing the more global rhetorical strategies in the text: as shown in the quotation above, RST analyses the textual level focusing on its contextual variables.
- The categories of relations are an open set susceptible to change according to the text-type and language. However, the ones described in Mann and Thompson (1987, 1988, 1992) refer to a variety of written monologues in English, not to other text-types.

The advantages of this model are its flexibility and openness which are fundamental in a cross linguistic study and also its detailed and clear definition of clause relations which can be applied to a variety of texts. The present study does not apply the type of analysis of RST, but draws from it the idea of saliency, related to 'nuclearity': some sections of the text are more salient than others, and the concept of 'main point', as described in the following sections, can be considered a 'nucleus' for the whole text.

Another aspect of RST that is relevant for the present study is a set of relations identified by Mann & Thompson, in particular Evaluation and Background. The full account of relations identified by the two scholars, can be found in Mann & Thompson (1986, 1987, 1988, 1992). The relations are functional and semantic and

they may or may not be morphologically or syntactically signalled (Mann & Thompson, 1988: 249-250): they tap both into cohesion (as defined in Halliday & Hasan, 1976; de Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981) and into coherence (as defined in de Beaugrande & Dressler, 1981), since coherence is not necessarily conveyed by cohesive discoursal features. This aspect is never clearly broached in Hoey (1983).

However, contrary to what Hoey's model does, Mann and Thompson seem to rely heavily on the analyst's intuitions to categorise relations rather than offering other, more specific variables such as linguistic indicators. The two scholars obviate this problem by cross-validation performed by a number of analysts. Nevertheless, the lack of focus on linguistic indicators is a drawback of RST. As Mauraanen (1993) remarks, linguistic indicators are not only syntactical and morphological, but they can also be lexical, based on information structure, repetition, change of topic, etc. She also argues for the necessity of having a framework of linguistic indicators to make the analysis less arbitrary.

Another shortcoming of RST pointed out by Mauraanen (1993) is that Mann and Thompson recognise the relevance of the context of production, but in practice, it is not clear how this influences the analysis of the rhetorical level of text:

Rhetorical intentions are regulated by generic constraints, and should therefore be specified at a general level which relates them to the social purpose of the text. (Mauraanen, 1993: 195)

Mauraanen would wish to see a better specified link in RST between what is considered the individual writer's goal and the context of text production. It must be said, however, that Mann & Thompson attempt to find a solution to this problem in the collection of articles they edited in 1992.

The context of production and the linguistic conventions related to it are fundamental to the present study and are the domain of the third approach discussed here: genre analysis.

11.6. Genre analysis

As its name indicates, genre analysis is based on the description of text in its discoursal and social context of production. This approach characterises Swales' work (1981, 1990) on genre in general and, in particular, on academic writing. On the one hand, Swales' work is a contribution to the theoretical study of genre and a well-established contribution to the pedagogical side of academic writing; on the other, the range of texts he analyses is limited because they all belong to the academic world; this means that his work has not been generalised and tested on text-types produced in other contexts. His specific interest in his 1990 book is what he calls 'research-process genre', that is academic written text dealing with research. Some of the principles used by Swales, however, can be fruitfully applied to analyse undergraduate student writing.

The basic characteristic of this approach is that it carefully locates the text within its context: this is the main influence of Swales' work on the present study (see Sections 3.2. and 3.3.2.). One problem of Swales' work, however, is that the linguistic analysis of text structures is not always systematically explained. This results in some uncertainty about terminology and linguistic variables used in the analysis.

The main unit of text structures in genre analysis is a 'move', which is not clearly defined in Swales. In the sense used by Swales, the term 'move' apparently derives from an unpublished M.A. dissertation by McKinlay (1984) and quoted in Dudley-Evans (1986): a move is 'a semantic unit which is related to the writer's purpose'

(Dudley-Evans, 1986: 131). Apart from the indeterminate nature of the definition in Swales' work, there is no explicitly devised framework to identify the moves: the identification of moves is partly based on linguistic indicators (above all lexical), but it is mainly based on the propositional content of stretches of text and related to the text-type.

In the analysis that follows, the main influence of Swales' work relates to the contextualisation of the text-type: the relation established between communicative event, participants in the event, text-type used by the participants, in short, the texts and their context of production (see Chapter 3).

11.7. A cross-linguistic study of text structures

An interesting approach to a cross-linguistic study of rhetoric is developed by Mauranen (1993): she does not propose a completely new model of analysis, but uses some of the principles discussed above to focus on particular aspects of rhetoric in texts in a cross-cultural context. Mauranen compares research articles written by scholars in English (L1), Finnish (L1), English (L2 by Finnish L1 speakers).

Mauranen's study is based on the tenets that follow.

- It is a textlinguistic study and therefore it analyses the surface features of research articles.
- In her analysis she relies on a series of linguistic indicators which allow her to relate text, rhetorical level, genre, communicative event. She focuses on the linguistic evidence found in the text rather than on the analyst's intuitions.
- The relations between text elements are an open and flexible set.
- Text structures are hierarchically organised.

- Her study focuses on the main point of the research articles and the way in which it is rhetorically presented by the authors in the three sets of data her study is based on.

The present study is influenced by the studies described in the previous sections, but adopts the method of analysis used by Mauranen in investigating the main point of texts and its immediate environment. Mauranen's approach has been chosen because it was devised for a cross-linguistic study, it focuses on discoursal aspects, the analysis is based on the evidence of linguistic indicators, the text-type analysed by Mauranen is related to the text-type of the present study.

In the pages that follow, the model of analysis used in this study is discussed and related to the approaches examined in the previous sections and to Mauranen's contribution to cross-linguistic analysis of text structures.

11.8. The main point in a text

The analysis will focus on the concept, function and position of the 'main point' in the students' texts (when a main point can be identified). The concept of 'main point' will be discussed and defined, its relevance to student writing will be examined and then criteria for identifying the main point in context will be given.

(From now on the beginning of a new paragraph in the quotation of data will be signalled by #)

11.8.1. The main point defined

The 'main point' consists of one or more propositions which, together with the propositions defining, explaining and expanding it, forms the thesis of a text and it is the section containing the most relevant information the addresser wants to

convey about the topic the text is about. The main point is a summary of the thesis argued by the student. The whole thesis consists of propositions which explain in detail, contextualise, elaborate on this core component. The argument consists of propositions supporting the thesis. In naturally occurring discourse the distinction between thesis and argument supporting it is not always clear-cut. The main point is intuitively straightforward and identifiable, but to give it validity, it has to be explained in terms of information encoded in written text.

The concept of main point can be related to the concept of 'topic' found in Keenan & Schieffelin (1976), Brown & Yule (1983). It is also inherently accepted in a hierarchical model of text structures such as RST, based on nuclearity, whereby there are sections of discourse which are more relevant than others in terms of conveying the information and achieving the writer's goal. These sections are usually linguistically signalled and become prominent in the text.

As already mentioned, Hoey (1983) argues for the interactive nature of texts (even in written monologue), and their inherent dialogic potential. For Hoey (1983) questions can be used to identify text structures and, therefore, it is possible to say that questions are implicit in the 'answers' given in texts.

In fact, in the student writing analysed here, there is an underlying question which is at the basis of the text production itself even though it does not belong to the text written by the student: the task set by the examiner is an implied question containing 'Do you agree that...?' or 'In your judgement, can the case be argued that ...?' (see Appendix 1). In some cases, this question is formulated in the interrogative form (see Italian examination tasks, Appendix 1), in other cases (see the English examination tasks, Appendix 1) its form is not interrogative but the task functions as a question or as an instruction to discuss or debate. The examination

question, oral or written, differs from the prototypical questions asked to elicit information both in form (at times it is not interrogative) and in function: it is rather an instruction to debate the issue since the propositional content of the elicited answer is already known (Blakemore, 1992: 114-116; Section 10.2.). This type of 'answer' or response to the examination task will allow the student to show her knowledge about the topic, her ability to discuss it and express ideas in a well-informed, well-structured way, possibly to show the critical ability she has acquired. This is the fundamental 'information' the reader will look for. If this is the relevance inherently present in the communicative event, the student will seek to convey the point not just in a minimally efficient way, but in a rhetorically appropriate way.

The working definition Mauranen gives of the main point is the following:

the main point of a text is the most directly expressed answer in the text to the question that the text asks (Mauranen, 1993: 205).

The main point of the text is then taken to be the most direct minimal answer to the question that can be found in the text. This analysis can be related to a functional analysis by observing that the question (together with the answer) constitutes the propositional aspect of the writer's goal. The rhetorical goal is then to persuade the reader to accept the answer. (ibid.: 205)

This definition, suitable for Mauranen's data, needs to be slightly modified in the present context. First of all, in the case of student writing, the rhetorical goal is not just the acceptance of the response given by the student, but it includes also the fact that the reader has to be convinced that the student has argumentative competence. Secondly, the main point is not always as monolithic an entity as Mauranen describes: the main point of the examination essays has revealed itself a more complex linguistic entity which encompasses what has been defined 'main question' and 'main evaluation' (detailed explanations and examples will be given in Section 11.8.4.).

This finding would confirm that the main point can have different configurations in different text-types. In some text-types these configurations are quite conventionalised and readers can have expectations about them, some text-types have also been widely investigated and categorised (it is the case, for instance, of narratives and scholarly writing), for other text-types, however, expectations are less precise for a variety of reasons (see Stevens, 1988; Hare *et al*, 1989). Student writing is intrinsically developmental and heterogeneous since it is influenced by other text types such as scholarly writing, lecture notes, face-to-face conversation, etc (see Chapter 3).

For student writing, there is also the resource of the pedagogical literature dealing with student writing where it is possible to find guidelines and conventionalised patterns (among others, Irmscher, 1981; Ellis & Hopkins, 1985; Jordan, 1990; Fabb and Durant, 1993 for English. Eco, 1977; Serafini, 1985; Bondioni, 1986; E.Di.S.U., 1995 for Italian). Manuals of this type, however, do not necessarily reflect the actual use of language in student writing.

English manuals are also more numerous, widespread and commonly used than Italian manuals and there are virtually no academic writing courses in Italian universities for Italian university students (one, organised in Venice University from Autumn 1996, was acclaimed as a novelty). In English manuals there is a lot more emphasis on the global structure of argumentative essays, paragraph construction, the importance of topic sentences than in Italian manuals (see, for instance Jordan, 1990: 8-9, 73-77; Ellis & Hopkins, 1985: 33-34; Fabb and Durant, 1993: 99). Eco (1977), instead is fairly non-committal about the actual structure of texts. More practical on such issues are Serafini (1985: 43-45), Bondioni (1986: 17) and E.Di.S.U. (1995: 66-71) who mention the 'tesi' (the main thesis to be demonstrated).

It is not possible to predict (or even to expect) a clearly defined structure in examination scripts. Time constraints do not allow the students much time to organise their own writing; additionally their writing ability is developing and they might not have a good knowledge of the topic they have to write about. It is predictable, however, that there is a main point in their scripts (more or less clearly stated) which is the most direct response to the examination task. It must be mentioned that variability in structure is fairly common in texts of all types and only a few text-types have a clearly predictable and fixed textual organisation (Dudley-Evans, 1986; Mauranen, 1993: 207).

11.8.2. Criteria for identifying the main point

Due to the predictable variation in structure of student writing and the cross-cultural differences in the pedagogical background in academic writing between the two groups of students, the criteria for identifying the main point have to be fairly flexible.

The linguistic criteria used by Mauranen to identify the main point are based on what she calls 'axle': the introduction, the conclusion and the title of the research papers she examines are the focal locations where the writer expresses the main idea of the paper (Mauranen, 1993: 208). The default expectation is to find the main question the paper gives an answer to in the introduction, the relevant answer should be contained in the conclusion section and both should match the title of the paper. These basic criteria can be used for my own data with some adjustments.

First of all, the examination task functions as a special kind of question (as explained above). It does not strictly belong to the scripts, but it is a cue given to

the student by the addressee of the script. This characteristic enhances the dialogic quality of the text.

As far as introduction and conclusion are concerned, the scripts do not always have clearly delimited sections which can be labelled in this way. In some cases, lack of time prevented the students from writing a conclusion. In other cases (especially in Italian scripts), the point is not made in the introduction, but in what could be called a middle position, since the beginning of the text is often taken up by a general introduction to the topic (background) different from the main point. Topic here is used in a non-linguistic sense and it simply means 'subject which is discussed, written about or studied' (Cambridge International Dictionary, 1995) and the main point is the proposition the student develops on this topic as a response to the examination task.

Because of the uncertainty described above, introduction and conclusion are retained as the two main locations in the texts to identify the main point, but, in some cases, stretches of text located elsewhere are used. In all cases, linguistic criteria will be given to justify the choice. Mauranen (1993) considers the idea of finding the main point in the axle title-introduction-conclusion as the ideal norm. In actual fact, there are texts in her own data which present a different situation from this default assumption. In the case of the present study, even the default assumption has to be relaxed.

11.8.3. The main point in its textual environment

11.8.3.1. The textual boundaries of the main point

The main point can be one or more propositions of length varying from one sentence to more than one sentence; it often takes up the space of an orthographic paragraph. In the present study there is flexibility about the length of the main point

given the examination conditions in which the students wrote. Some students write faster and might expand on their main idea more than others, or, alternatively, they might have more time to plan and phrase their main idea more succinctly. There are, therefore, individual differences in the way in which the writer's claim is expressed through the main point.

Mauranen (1993) tends to label as main point short stretches of text, often one sentence long, in this respect she might be influenced by studies such as Stevens (1988) in which the main idea of paragraphs is taken to be a one-sentence idea or the well-established concept of 'topic sentence' used in writing manuals (Fabb & Durant, 1993: 99). In the present study, the boundaries of the main point depend on the way the student decides (or is able) to word her claim, that is the minimal answer to the examination task. The following sections will identify some linguistic indicators which signal the presence (and the boundaries) of the main point as well as define the terminology and the concepts adopted in the analysis.

11.8.3.2. The semantic and rhetorical functions of the main point

Analysis of the data has shown that the semantic function of the main point is, prototypically, the 'evaluation' of the examination task. 'Evaluation' is taken from Mann and Thompson's categorisation (1987, 1988) of text relations. Their categorisation is based on the clause as unit, but they argue that the same categories can be used for other (hierarchically higher) levels of text structures, such as the main point of the script. In this case 'evaluation' is a functional label assigned to a text unit, and, adapting Mann and Thompson's definition to my data, it is an assessment of the situation presented in the examination task. It is the student's statement as to whether she agrees with the set topic in the quotation (in the English task) or which of the two alternative she opts to argue for (in the Italian task). The

label 'evaluation', in the present context, will be only used to indicate the functional unit related to the main point.

There are some scripts in Italian and in English where the main point is not easily identifiable. In these cases, there are functions other than evaluation that are the closest element to a main point (however non-prototypical) in the text. These functions will be mentioned and defined in the data analysis.

'Functional text units' are defined by the general description of the role that they have in the text they belong to (evaluation, explanation, evidence, etc.). 'Rhetorical move' is the functional unit of text seen from the viewpoint of its role within the rhetorical goal of the text. It has internal coherence, linguistically signalled boundaries and it contributes to 'presenting the writer's claim in such a way as to increase the reader's acceptance of the claim' (Mauranen, 1993: 223-225). Therefore, a rhetorical move can be 'premise', 'conclusion', etc. and in the scripts it is often the case that the main point (the functional unit of evaluation) is also the conclusion or the premise.

A rhetorical move is seen, therefore, as part of the global rhetorical structure of a text belonging to a specific text-type, having specific rhetorical goals and produced within a specific communicative context. The description of rhetorical moves is related to the context of production following Swales's approach to texts. However, Swales never clearly defines moves and he never offers linguistic criteria to identify them (Swales, 1981, 1990). Mauranen (1993) gives more precise guidelines to identify the functional units and the rhetorical moves by listing the linguistic indicators which signal them; however, there are still uncertainties in her discussion as to the boundaries of the units and their reciprocal hierarchical position within the text. There is also uncertainty in her study as to whether a functional unit is just the

same as a rhetorical move defined from a different viewpoint and for a different purpose, or they do not exactly overlap. From Mauranen's analysis, it seems that functional units and rhetorical moves actually differ in other respects, but this is never clearly investigated in her work. The means for identifying the rhetorical moves, for instance, seem to be different from the ways in which the functional units are identified, but the problem is not specifically dealt with.

Another issue which has not been tackled by Mauranen (and has surfaced during my data analysis) is that some types of linguistic indicators cluster around certain moves and functional units rather than others. In her study, she identifies a number of linguistic indicators, but she does not specify which are more likely to be found in what units or moves and which clusters are more frequent for certain units or moves. If all these variables are not specified, the analyst has to fall back on his/her intuition, which is precisely what Mauranen tries to avoid from the start.

11.8.4. The main point in the data

The analysis of the data showed that the main point is a feature commonly present in the scripts and is usually signalled by linguistic clues which make it recognisable for the reader. In the analysis that follows, the characteristics and the location of the main point in the scripts are discussed.

As hypothesised in the previous discussion about the main point, the introductory and concluding sections of the scripts are the locations in which the main point is most likely to be found, but there are instances where the main point has a different position or it is difficult to find altogether. In particular, the Italian scripts show several instances in which the main point can be found in the middle section of the scripts.

7.8.4.1. The main point as 'main question' and 'main evaluation'

As mentioned before, an element which contributes to the identification of the main point is the examination task (see Appendix 1). This task and the implied 'question' (see Section 11.8.1.) cannot be considered part of the script, and therefore cannot be strictly part of the main point made by the student, but they serve as a guideline for identifying the main point in the students' texts.

There is a distinction to be drawn between the task / implied question set by the lecturer and the question (implicitly or explicitly) addressed and answered by the students: in most cases they are similar or very closely related, but in principle they are two separate concepts. In fact, there is a clear instance, among the English scripts (E18), in which the student misunderstood the set task and therefore the point made by her is quite different from the expectations of the lecturer. The lecturer remarks on this and writes in the margin of script E18: *This is not what the question states*. This remark is the most explicit instance that the examination task is perceived as an implied question (even when its form is not interrogative, as in this case) and can contribute to identifying the main point of the script without being part of it.

There is also another distinction to be drawn between 'main question' and 'main point'. Some scripts overtly identify, reformulate and specify the question the script is going to answer or is answering: this will be called here the 'main question', which, for the reasons explained above, differs from the task set by the examiner. When the examination task is accurately interpreted, the two concepts should be similar. It could be said that the 'main question' sets what Hoey calls the Problem.

The inclusion of the 'main question' in the concept of 'main point' differs from Mauranen's definition (see Section 11.8.1.) which only includes the answer to the

main question. In the examination scripts, one of the student's communicative goals is to demonstrate, among other things, that she has fully understood the examination task and, therefore, the set Problem (in Hoey's terms).

The following are instances of main questions:

E14-1-6 Whether or not literature should be used as a means of persuading its readers to adopt the ideas or views of its author is a point of debate. The issue of this essay is whether literature is more effective in its influence on society when it does not have deliberate designs on its readers or not.

II-51-52 Appendice romantica o protodecadentismo? La risposta non è facile [...]
Romantic appendix or pre-decadentism? The answer is not easy

In other cases, instead, the script does not state the main question, but the main point in a complete form:

E11-1-13 The history of literature must move from primitive forms to more sophisticated forms, just as all areas of human progress, whether in sciences or arts, move in this direction. The simple reason is that humans build upon the past, upon what has gone before, and thus are never entirely original because, rather than working in a vacuum, the human mind co-operates with the world of ideas which exist externally. And yet 'sophisticated' connotes a value-judgement, as if it were better than the pejorative 'primitive', and this certainly cannot be the case as [illegible word] literature of all ages seems to have a mark of profundity - something beneath the 'primitive' or 'sophisticated' form - regardless of its age.

II-139-143 Concludendo, mi pare non si possa parlare di scapigliatura come romanticismo oppure come protodecadentismo, come sostiene W. Binni, perché la scapigliatura si spiega proprio in questa convivenza fra 'vecchio' e 'nuovo'.
In conclusion, it seems to me that it is not possible to speak of scapigliatura as romanticism or pre-decadentism, as W. Binni maintains, because scapigliatura can be explained through this co-existence of 'old' and 'new'.

The stretch of text which has the function of evaluating the examination task will be called the 'main evaluation' (adapting one of Mann & Thompson's categories to the specific type of data): the main evaluation assesses the quotation presented in the task (for the English scripts) or assesses the alternatives given in the Italian examination task (see Mann & Thompson, 1987, 1988). The main evaluation(s) contribute(s) to the main point of the script together with the main question(s)

(when a main question is stated). I will assume that the superordinate term 'main point' includes 'main question' and 'main evaluation', even if in some scripts only one of the two is present.

The following section analyses the type of linguistic indicators which contribute to identifying the main point. While the propositional content is a fundamental element to take into account when looking for the main idea expressed in a text, there are, also, explicit linguistic signals used by the writer to highlight the stretch of text containing the main idea. As shown below there are also linguistic strategies which are more frequently used for the main question and others which are more common for the main evaluation. These strategies are not necessarily used deliberately by the student writers, given the limited time they have for planning their writing, but rather, they are linguistic devices acquired through their practice of essay writing and often used automatically in an exam situation.

11.8.4.2. The linguistic indicators of the main point

There are several linguistic indicators which signal the presence of the main point. Usually these indicators are not isolated, but form clusters of features which signal the main point and its boundaries. The length of the main point can vary from one to several sentences: it expresses either the question which is at the basis of the script, or the main evaluation of the examination task, that is the main opinion the student holds about it, an opinion which is elaborated and supported throughout the whole text.

In the analysis of the present data, the length of the main point is rarely just one sentence (as it is often the case in Mauranen's data): the student writer usually needs a longer stretch of text to convey the main idea. The theoretical complexity of the quotation given to the students usually requires an articulated response rather than a

one-sentence response: in many cases the main point occupies a whole paragraph or more than one.

The discussion of the linguistic indicators will be kept to a minimum because several of them have already been analysed in the previous chapters (see the references below). It is interesting to underline that some of the interpersonal devices examined in the previous chapters form clusters of indicators around the main point. This would signal that the main point is a crucial element in the text, a textual cross-roads in which ideational, interpersonal and textual features cluster to show its prominence to the reader so that the reading process can become more effective (see Stevens, 1988). The main point is ideational because its propositional content conveys the relevant claim of the text, it is interpersonal because its presence is usually overtly signalled to the reader and it is textual because its presence is crucial for the structuring of information in the text.

The list that follows includes only some of the most frequent linguistic indicators of the main point. Others, such as thematisation, are not investigated here because they are only peripherally relevant to the interpersonal metafunction.

1. Lexical references

Lexical references are made to the examination task or, in the case of the English data, the quotation in the examination task. They can be found both in the main question and in the main evaluation. This is one of the examples in English quoted above:

E11-1-13 The history of literature must move from primitive forms to more sophisticated forms, just as all areas of human progress, whether in sciences or arts, move in this direction. The simple reason is that humans build upon the past, upon what has gone before, and thus are never entirely original because, rather than working in a vacuum, the human mind co-operates with the world of ideas which exist externally. And yet 'sophisticated' connotes a value-judgement, as if it were better than the pejorative 'primitive', and this certainly cannot be the case as

[illegible word] *literature of all ages seems to have a mark of profundity - something beneath the 'primitive' or 'sophisticated' form - regardless of its age.*

In this passage some of the terms used by the student are the same as those found in the examination task, others belong to the same lexical field. There is also a very strong link between the propositional content of the quotation and the passage (the main point is strictly related to the ideational metafunction). This can be seen in the Italian scripts as well:

15-62-66 # Affermare, quindi, che questa corrente sia assolutamente o un'appendice romantica, o pre-decadentismo è erroneo. Essa è condizionata, infatti, tanto dai miti residui del romanticismo, quanto dalle prime tematiche decadenti.

To maintain, therefore, that this literary trend is in absolute terms either a romantic appendix or pre-decadentism is wrong. It is conditioned, in actual fact, both by the last myths of Romanticism and by the first decadent themes.

2. Metadiscoursal features and non-reflexive connectives and speech-act markers (a full discussion of metadiscoursal devices can be found in Chapter 9; Sections 9.5.4. and 9.5.2. address the problem of reflexive and non-reflexive connectives and speech act markers respectively).

3. Direct or indirect questions (the variety of questions that can be found in the data are discussed in Sections 10.2., 10.2.1., 10.2.2., 10.2.3.).

Indicators of point 2 and 3 can be exemplified by another passage in English (quoted in Section 11.8.4.1.) and containing the main question of the script:

E14-1-6 Whether or not literature should be used as a means of persuading its readers to adopt the ideas or views of its author is a point of debate. The issue of this essay is whether literature is more effective in its influence on society when it does not have deliberate designs on its readers or not.

The Italian example clearly shows that direct and indirect questions principally signal the main question, whereas metadiscoursal devices and non-reflexive connectives and speech-act markers may also signal the main evaluation:

13-66-75 # A questo punto è lecito chiedersi se la scapigliatura non sia altro che un prolungamento, una fase ulteriore del Romanticismo, o se piuttosto non sia un movimento che prepara la strada ai poeti decadenti. Ormai la prima ipotesi, nonostante molti l'abbiano sostenuta, è stata superata e si riconosce che gli scapigliati si spingono oltre il Romanticismo con una poetica indipendente e distinta, ma è pur sempre vero che certi autori, soprattutto gli anticipatori di questa tendenza lombarda, risentono ancora degli influssi romantici.

At this point one may wonder whether scapigliatura is nothing else than a continuation, a further phase of Romanticism or rather a movement which opens the way to decadent poets. In spite of the fact that many supported it, by now the first hypothesis has been overcome and it is recognised that the scapigliati go further than Romanticism with an independent and distinctive poetics. However, it is true that some authors, especially the anticipators of this lombard trend, are still influenced by Romantic aspects.

4. **Modality** (discussed in Chapter 7).

5. **Politeness strategies, or, alternatively, lack of politeness strategies and categorical assertions** (examined mainly in Chapter 8 but also related to issues broached in Chapter 7).

These two strategies are exemplified together because modality plays an important part in expressing politeness; the two phenomena, however, have to be kept distinct because each one is complex and wide-ranging, as shown in the sections devoted to their analysis in the data (Chapters 7 and 8). They are mostly used to express the main evaluation, but can be found in the main question. These strategies often overlap with point number 6 below.

E3-1-5 The quotation in question is one which appears to be a very bald, generalised statement. It is almost inevitable, therefore, that one will find oneself at least partly in agreement with it and that there will be points on which disagreement is possible.

113-193-201 La Scapigliatura può essere vista come un pre-Decadentismo in fase embrionale, perché potenzialmente ne conserva tutte le caratteristiche, però il Decadentismo italiano si sviluppa in un contesto storico che è diverso e quindi se proprio di pre-Decadentismo puro non si può parlare, si può dire almeno che la Scapigliatura è un archetipo di esso e che però, si è sviluppata in un contesto storico e sociale tutto suo.

Scapigliatura can be seen as a beginning phase of pre-decadentism because it potentially maintains all its characteristics, however Italian decadentism develops in a historical context which is different and therefore if it is not possible to speak about pre-decadentism as such, it is possible to say that scapigliatura is its archetype which developed in a historical social context of its own.

6. **Use of person markers or 'impersonal' strategies** (discussed in Chapters 5 and 6).

In some cases the evaluation is expressed by the student using the first person singular or plural (see E2-1-3 below, point 7). Often, however, person markers are

combined with the strategies which in this study have been called 'impersonal' (Chapter 5 and 6). All the examples reported so far contain instances of these impersonal features (see, in particular, the Italian passages I3-66-75 and I13-193-201). It is interesting to notice that, whereas the Italian students tend to avoid person deixis, it is not unusual to find it in the main point of the Italian texts: once the argument has been constructed, the main point might be expressed personally as in the conclusion of script I5:

I5-83-88 #Ritengo perciò, che attribuire alla scapigliatura, o la definizione di appendice romantica, o di pre-decadentismo sia troppo limitativo. Entrambe le denominazioni si addicono a designare questo movimento, che sicuramente ha contribuito a rinnovare e a migliorare la cultura e la società italiana.

I think therefore that labelling scapigliatura either as a romantic appendix or as pre-decadentism is too limiting. Both labels are suitable to describe this movement which certainly contributed to renew and improve Italian culture and society.

Person markers are mostly found in main evaluations, whereas impersonal strategies are also found in main questions.

The instance which follows is the main point made at the very end of one of the English scripts:

E4-55-65 #We can see therefore that there is much similarity between two texts of vastly differing periods and styles, written in different ages. I would just like to reiterate the point I made at the beginning when I suggested that literature, good literature, is always valid no matter what period or style it is written in. As long as it has some aspect of mankind, it is relevant to now as it was when it was written. The Canterbury Tales is still widely read and enjoyed now as it ever was, as it comes a universal application. < sic >

In this example, only the first person deixis has been underlined; in fact, the passage contains a cluster of linguistic indicators, including modality, politeness features, metadiscoursal features (not least an explicit mention to *the point* made at the beginning of the script) and lexical references to the essay title. Moreover, this conclusion to the script, as the previous example in Italian, forms a paragraph, which can be another orthographic indicator of main point.

7. Paragraph or sentence boundaries.

The examples used above (I5-83-88, E4-55-65) are instance of the orthographic paragraph marking the beginning and the end of the main point and, in these cases, the conclusions of the scripts at the same time. Sentence boundaries can also contribute to identifying the main point:

E2-1-3 I think it is unfair to say that in the history of literature there has been a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.

Some of the indicators (lexical reference, modality, politeness features) might occur on their own and still signal the main point, but others, such as paragraph and sentence boundaries, have to occur with other indicators. As shown in the examples above, these indicators usually co-occur and cluster together.

As already mentioned, some indicators occur more frequently to signal the main question, others to signal the main evaluation. The most obvious indicator of the main question is an interrogative form or an indirect question; among others, one example in Italian is I3-66-75 (quoted in this section, points 2 & 3) and in English the following instance:

E16-13-16 But does literature that does not have evident designs on its readers work any better? The novel, in my opinion, can be just as socially effective as a political manifesto.

In both occurrences the student rewords the examination task and then concisely answers it. The two passages, therefore, contain both the main question and the answer to it, that is the main evaluation. In other cases an indirect question can set the main question of the script, see occurrence E14-1-6 (Section 11.8.4.1.), or alternatively the main question can just be a hypothesis. When a hypothesis is formulated, it usually both sets a question and gives an evaluation:

E13-5-20 If literature's appeal and influence is so great it is inevitable that its use in fiction will be for, in many cases, for social reform < sic >, identifying the evils of the day, whether it be in politics, art, war, the position of women or highlight the excuses and shallow values of the society you live in. Moreover the ways in which

the writer approaches his readership, and the slant, and indeed the nature of the reform he promotes all influence the technique used to convey the message; if social reform is the intention of the work then the assessment of its success must be based on the effectiveness of the reform of changing opinion. Socially effective literature is intrinsically connected with change and this change can be affected in many ways - through an appeal indirectly or directly.

There are indicators which are more likely to signal the main evaluation of the script: politeness strategies, modality, person markers, as shown in examples I5-83-88 and E4-55-65 already quoted.

11.8.4.3. The location and characteristics of the main point

The location of the main point in the scripts can contribute to identifying some of the rhetorical strategies used by the student writer to achieve the main rhetorical goal and focus the reader's attention on the purpose of the script and the opinion/evaluation of the student writer. The present section will analyse the location of the main point in the scripts and relate it to the constraints of the text-type the students adopt.

The analysis will start with the example of main point presentation in one of the scripts:

E13-5-20 If literature's appeal and influence is so great it is inevitable that its use in fiction will be for, in many cases, for social reform, identifying the evils of the day, whether it be in politics, art, war, the position of women or highlight the excuses and shallow values of the society you live in. Moreover the ways in which the writer approaches his readership, and the slant, and indeed the nature of the reform he promotes all influence the technique used to convey the message; if social reform is the intention of the work then the assessment of its success must be based on the effectiveness of the reform of changing opinion. Socially effective literature is intrinsically connected with change and this change can be affected in many ways - through an appeal indirectly or directly.

The main point is made at the beginning of the script (there is a short background section before this passage which belongs to the first paragraph): the student sets the hypothesis related to the examination task and then gives a provisional evaluation of it. As a rhetorical move it is given as a premise, this evaluation is going to be

argued for and against in the body of the script and the main point / main evaluation is forcefully made at the end (rhetorical move: conclusion) (the use of *does* for emphatic affirmative polarity signals the writer's positive evaluation of the set quotation):

E13-106-114 # Socially effective literature is that which does have evident designs on its readers, for if its designs were not evident they would pass the casual reader by - and to be socially effective it is here you must catch < sic > . However its effect is multiplied by allowing the reader to deduce the issues and wrongs, perhaps through raising their emotional indignation rather than telling < sic > . While being told about a wrong has merely a momentary impact, deducing and realising a wrong has a lasting and effective effect.

This essay is one clear example of text pattern used by some of the students and recommended in manuals about writing for students and influenced by a long tradition in argumentative writing:

Main point (containing main question and sometimes main evaluation) / premise +
Development of the argumentation for and against the main point and
exemplification +
Main point (main evaluation) / conclusion.

Manuals of essay writing do not teach the generic constraints of essays or examination answers in these terms, they use a different terminology, but fundamentally this is the recommended text pattern for argumentative pieces of student writing in English in the academic setting (Irmscher, 1981; Ellis & Hopkins, 1985; Jordan, 1990; Fabb & Durant, 1993). Fabb & Durant (1993), for instance, recommend:

The first paragraph of your essay tells your reader what your essay will be about: what the main focus is and what question(s) you are going to answer. But your first paragraph is also your opportunity to start actively working on those questions. This is true even if the question has been prescribed by someone else (perhaps in an examination); in such cases, you reformulate the question in your first paragraph to demonstrate that you have understood it and can develop arguments from it. (ibid.: 92)

Your reader will pay particular attention to your last paragraph and last sentence, largely because the last section has to bring to a suitable conclusion the various different arguments you have made. (ibid.: 95)

In a less exhaustive way, Italian manuals report similar suggestions (Eco, 1977: 122; Serafini, 1985: 71; Bondioni, 1986: 17).

The question is how far the students comply with these generic constraints or conventions proposed in textbooks and (as far as English students are concerned) taught in writing classes for university students. In particular, how far they do it when they are under the pressure of exam conditions.

11.8.4.3.1. The presence of the main point

The presence of the main point in the scripts is widespread both in English and in Italian. In English the majority of the scripts (24 out of 25) have an identifiable main point. Script E7 does not have a clearly outlined answer to the set question, the student seems to have a main point, but she never states it in an overt and concise way. She rather comments on and interprets the examples she gives without ever developing a main point, the only stretch of text which seems to be the closest to a main point is a general evaluation the student makes at the beginning:

E7-1-4 The progress from the primitive and basic to the sophisticated in literature is a fundamental one. We see it in all various microcosms into which literature can be divided.

However, this is too general a statement to call it a main point. This is the only instance of a script which does not have a clearly identifiable main point.

In another instance (script E18, already mentioned in section 11.8.4.) the student misunderstands the set task and makes a main point which is not exactly relevant; the examiner comments on this on the margin of the script (*This is not what the question states*). However, the student carries forth her own point throughout the script: a main point is made and therefore I will not discard this paper in my

discussion of the data. In other words, the actual propositional content of the main point might not be the answer to the set task, but the text pattern can still be analysed and commented on.

In the Italian data the presence of the main point is widespread, but there are scripts in which the main point is not clearly signalled or its semantic function of evaluation merges with others. Script I2, for instance, has two stretches of text which present some of the indicators of the main point, but their semantic relation with what precedes is rather one of 'elaboration' (additional details about the subject matter are presented, Mann & Thompson, 1987: 52). The two stretches of text are quoted below: neither is signalled by paragraph boundary, the first is in the middle of the script, the second at the very end. I have underlined the linguistic indicators of main point:

I2-80-85 Le tematiche scapigliate possono in un certo qual modo preannunciare il decadentismo, siamo proprio in una fase decadente in cui l'artista non si sente partecipe e si isola dagli altri cercando rifugio nella poesia, perché non si sente integrato nella nuova realtà trasformata < sic >.

The themes of scapigliati can, in a sense, forerun decadentism; we are in a decadent phase in which the artist does not feel directly involved and gets isolated from people taking refuge in poetry, because he does not feel part of the new transformed society.

I2-123-127 Si può dire perciò che benché esulano gli Scapigliati < sic > dagli schemi tradizionali della poesia tuttavia è presente in loro una voglia di ritornare al passato e alle tradizioni e al ripiegarsi in esse.

It can be said, therefore, that even if the scapigliati differ from the traditional conventions of poetry, it is present in them the desire to go back to the past, to traditions and withdraw into them.

Out of 20 Italian scripts, 5 have a main point which is unclearly signalled even if retrievable in all instances (I2, I12, I17, I18, I20).

Whereas the presence of the main point is generalised, its characteristics and location in the scripts vary. In the next section, these two aspects will be discussed together because they are two complementary aspects of text patterns.

11.8.4.3.2. The main point in the English scripts

Some of the English scripts contain both the main question and the main evaluation of the title quotation, however, in one case there does not seem to be a clear evaluation and only the main question is clearly set (see Table 1 below):

E19-7-13 It is still a matter of intense debate which is the most socially effective way of imparting concern to the public.

Literature to tackle this problem can be of two basic types: fiction or non-fiction, both attract different audiences.

In some scripts the main evaluation is directly stated without reformulating the question:

E4-1-8 # All good literature should offer something which is profound and which makes some sort of contribution to its readership. 'Primitive' and 'sophisticated' are misdemeanours < sic > in our instance because they have no real relevance. 'Primitive' could refer to early styles of writing but, as with Wordsworth, the most simple styles reveal elemental truths of a profound nature. Therefore to state that there is a 'progress' from primitive to sophisticated forms is wrong.

In these scripts the main point consists only of the main evaluation which is usually (but not in all cases) rephrased, re-elaborated or improved at the end of the script and the argumentation in the script is structured in such a way as to explain the main evaluation, give evidence for it and/or re-elaborate on it. In these cases the main evaluation is usually fronted in the script (given as premise) and the reader is immediately offered a value-judgement which will be argued for in the script: the student's claim is overtly made from the beginning. This rhetorical choice can be made in a clear-cut way or in a more tentative and less assertive manner; in both cases, however, the reader is immediately confronted with the writer's claim.

The type of rhetorical choice outlined above is similar to the text pattern described in Fabb and Durant (1993) (see Section 11.8.4.3.) with the difference that the main question is not rephrased by the student, but rather the task set by the examiner is immediately assessed and evaluated. Only a small number of scripts construct the argumentation setting the main question first, arguing for and against the title

quotation and then giving the main evaluation (E9, E14, E16, E17, E19, E20, E23, E24). Only E14, however, is structured in the following way:

main question / premise + body of the script + main evaluation / conclusion.

The other instances either have the main evaluation immediately after the main question (and therefore the main evaluation is fronted in the script: E9, E16, E24), or the main evaluation is placed at the beginning and at the end and the main question in the middle of the script (E17, E20, E23). In E19, however, there is just the main question, whereas the main evaluation is never clearly stated.

A recurring pattern in the English essays, therefore, seems to be a fronted evaluation at the beginning of the script and another evaluation at the end of the script. The final evaluation can be just a restatement of the main point made at the beginning and therefore a restatement of the evaluation given for the examination task, or, alternatively, the second evaluation can complement and complete the more general one made at the beginning. The table below summarises the finding concerning the location and the characteristics of the main point in the scripts. The numbers refer to the lines in the scripts. The last number for each script refers to the concluding line; if this number is in brackets, it means that it does not belong to the main point. A question mark (?) signals the main question.

TABLE 1: Main point in the English scripts

no main point: E7

E1	
1-10.....	(72)
E2	
1-2.....	69-74
E3	
1-5.....	(85)
E4	
1-8.....	57-65

E5	
1-5.....	63-69
E6	
.....	58-59
E7	
.....	(74)
E8	
1-6.....	48-51
E9	
....?8-10 + 10-11.....	41-44
E10	
.....14-19.....31-35.....	77-86
E11	
1-13.....31-35.....	95-105
E12	
4-5....14-17.....	(84)
E13	
....5-20.....	106-114
E14	
?1-7.....	82-97
E15	
5-14.....73-76.....	108-122
E16	
.....?13-14 + 14-16....?28-29.....78-81....	(90)
E17	
1-9.....?46-47 + 47-54.....	90-95
E18	
1-14.....	130-140
E19	
....?*7-13.....	(61)
E20	
1-5....?11-13.....	62-67
E21	
1-12.....	(45)
E22	
1-7.....	77-83
E23	
.....7-12.....?21-25.....42-46.....	(65)

E24

.....?14-15 + 16-20.....(82)

E25

1-11.....48-57

Summary: the main point in the scripts

beginning

central

end

19

9

16

? the script has a main question as well (E9, E14, E16, E17, E20 E23, E24)

* script E19 has only the main question

The table shows that the main evaluation tends to be located either at the end or at the beginning (starting within the first 10 lines) of the scripts and the main question tends to be located at the beginning or towards the beginning of the script. The most frequent location of the main point at the two extremes of the scripts seems to comply with what the writing manuals recommend the students should do. Given the lack of time for revision and editing, the adherence to this convention is remarkable on the part of the students. The table also shows how the evaluation is frequently fronted, giving the main point at the beginning of the script (19 scripts) and 9 evaluations can be found in the central section of the script; in 16 occurrences, the evaluation is restated at the end. Fronting the evaluation is a rhetorical choice which confronts the reader with the writer's claim at the beginning of the script (as a premise). The body of the text will provide explanation, evidence, interpretation of the evidence and elaboration (in different order and depth) for the evaluation of the title quotation. The writer's claim becomes therefore the point of departure for the argumentation contained in the text.

In some cases the result is clumsy or partially successful, but the attempt to provide the reader with the main point at the beginning or/and at the end is generalised and, given the little time the students have for writing, it can be considered an internalised writing strategy for the English students.

The other rhetorical choice is that of providing the evaluation as a conclusion, after the argumentation has been set, explained, exemplified and elaborated on in the previous sections of the script. The rhetorical choice of preparing the ground for the writer's opinion and evaluation is less frequent in the English data: only one script has the main point only at the end (E6), two scripts have their main point both in the middle and at the end (E10, E12) and E16 has the main evaluation towards the end of the script. In these cases an interpretative framework is set up for the reader before the main point is expressed.

11.8.4.3.3. The main point in the Italian scripts

In the Italian scripts the presence of the main question is limited to 3 scripts out of 20 (I1, I3 and I11), whereas all scripts have the main evaluation. In scripts I1 and I3, the main question is located in a middle position after an introductory background before the main evaluation (I1: line 51; I3: lines 66-69), in I11, instead, the main question is located at the very end and it does not have the function of setting the problem, but rather of clinching the argument in a concise and precise way, after having carefully constructed the discussion supporting it for 196 lines. The question is part of the conclusion:

I11-197-199 Gli scapigliati, dunque, tardo-romantici o pre-decadenti? A mio giudizio tardo-romantici e pre-decadenti insieme.

Were Scapigliati, then, post-romantic or pre-decadent? In my opinion post-romantic and pre-decadent at the same time.

It is interesting to notice the parallelism of the structures used by the student and the repetitions which echo the wording of the examination task (both sentences are minimal clauses, lexical repetition is so strong that the student almost establishes a fictional dialogue using an adjacency pair). There are no instances in the English scripts of a main question located near or in the conclusion.

The number of scripts examined is limited and the findings would need further research on wider corpora. However, the conclusion that can be drawn by looking at the findings is that the Italian students did not regard the explicit setting of the problem as a main rhetorical goal.

Another noticeable feature regards the location of the main evaluation in the Italian scripts. Table 2 summarises the findings about the Italian scripts. The numbers refer to the lines of the script. The last number for each script refers to the final line; the number is in brackets when it does not belong to the main point. A question mark indicates the main question (?), otherwise the lines refer to the main evaluation.

TABLE 2: Main point in the Italian scripts

I1	.....?51 + 51-56.....139-143
I2	.....80-85.....123-127
I3	.....?66-69 + 69-75.....158-165
I4	.....106-110
I5	.....38-43.....62-66.....83-88
I6	1-7.....37-42.....115-120
I7	.....21-26.....80-86.....(112)
I8	.....121-128
I9	1-4.....128-134
I10	.....148-154
I11	

	.....? 197 + 197-198	
I12	.....66-72.....	(109)
I13	.....179-183.....	193-201
I14	.....	131-135
I15	.....	196-203
I16	.....	117-125
I17	.....117-120...	(126)
I18	.....177-181...	(193)
I19	.....	95-109
I20	.....	99-116
<hr/>		
Summary: the main point in the scripts		
beginning	central	end
2	7	18

As the table shows, there are two recurrent features in the main point of the Italian scripts. First of all there is a clear tendency for the main evaluation to be located in a middle location, after a background section or/and at the end of the script with the rhetorical function of conclusion. Only two scripts have the main point at the beginning as a premise (I6, I9) and in one case (I7) the main point is close to the beginning.

When the evaluation is in a middle section of the text, it usually follows a background (I1, I2, I3, I5, I6, I12). ‘Background’ is here borrowed from Mann and Thompson (1987, 1988): ‘background’ increases the ability of the reader to understand what the writer means in another stretch of text. In the scripts, background is generally signalled by rather general considerations:

E10-1-13 Literature is the means of allowing an author to express an individuality, artistry and knowledge that no other persona can assume. The imaginative quality of a work of art may be immune to imitation, but the structure itself is a learned form. [...]

In the Italian scripts a background section is very common and usually rather long, showing that one of the student's rhetorical aims is convincing the reader that she masters this sort of background knowledge. One of the students metadiscoursally remarks on this and opens her text in the following way (beginning section of a long background):

I13-1-8 Per poter apprezzare la Scapigliatura dobbiamo considerare il periodo in cui si sviluppa tale fenomeno, e cioè il decennio che va dal 1860 al 1870. Un buon metro d'analisi è quello che parte dal generale della fenomenologia ed arriva al particolare, cioè all'embrione del fenomeno stesso. Per generale intendiamo la situazione dell'Italia post-risorgimentale (che non è delle più floride!).

In order to understand Scapigliatura, we have to consider the period in which this phenomenon evolves and therefore we have to analyse the years between 1860 and 1870. A good method of analysis is that that starts from the general aspects of phenomena and gets down to the details, in other words to the core of the phenomenon. With the term general we mean the situation of Italy after Risorgimento (which is not the most florid one!).

Apart from the inaccuracy of the passage, this quotation gives an insight into what the student is trying to accomplish: her aim is to move from the general aspects to the 'details' or, rather, as she herself mentions, to the 'core' of the problem, the main point. The evaluation which can be found in the middle section of some scripts (I1, I2, I3, I5, I6, I12) seems to have the rhetorical function of making the main point after the general section of the background, shifting the reader's attention from general issues to the more specific problem-solution she has to broach:

I7-21-26 Furono gli scapigliati, letterati eclettici e difficilmente riconducibili a schemi precostituiti, per i quali si può certo affermare che furono insieme estrema appendice romantica e anticipazione decadente.

Scapigliati were eclectic artists and it is hardly possible to view them according to traditional schemata; it is certainly possible to argue that they were both the extreme end of Romanticism and the anticipation of decadentism.

All scripts but 2 (I7 and I11) have the main point located at the end and functioning as a conclusion. It seems that it is only when the Italian students have structured the whole argument that they draw their main point as a conclusion section:

114-131-135 # Il movimento degli scapigliati fu perciò espressione di un periodo di grande evoluzione e, proprio per questo fu un movimento che riflesse sia elementi dell'età immediatamente precedente, quella romantica, sia dell'età che si presentava alle porte, quella decadente.

The movement of scapigliati was, therefore, the expression of a period of great social changes and, for this reason, it was a movement that showed both elements of the immediately preceding age, the romantic one, and elements of the age which was starting, the decadent one.

This rhetorical procedure adopted by the Italian students of moving from the general aspects to the more relevant core of the problem (main point) would explain the very limited use of the main question and the rare presence of a main point at the beginning as a premise.

To summarise the findings for the Italian data, the most common location for the main point in the data is the end of the script: after a general background has been established, the argument has been developed, the examples given and the interpretation of the examples analysed. At that stage, the student makes her point which often takes up the rhetorical function of conclusion.

11.8.4.3.4. The comparison of the findings

In his analysis of argumentative texts, Lo Cascio (1991) examines the main argumentative relations which can be found in texts. One of the most common relation is the simplified sequence '*argomento - opinione*' or '*opinione - argomento*' (Lo Cascio, 1991: 195) which can be related to Martin's 'Thesis' and 'Argument' or 'Argument' and 'Thesis' (Martin, 1985, see Section 11.2.). In the data the former sequence is closer to the structure most frequently chosen by the Italian students, the latter sequence better reflects the choices of the English students.

Mauranen (1993) noticed how in the scholarly writing she examined, English native speakers would frequently locate the main point at the beginning of the script,

whereas the Finnish native speakers tended to state it at the end of the paper. The data of the present study and Mauranen's data are not fully comparable because Mauranen looks at scholarly articles (mainly empirical studies). Nevertheless, the tendency of fronting the main point can be noticed for both studies in the English data. Additionally, Stalker & Stalker (1989) reports the finding that novice writers in American universities tended to place their main thesis at the end in their early drafts, and subsequently they would move their thesis to the first paragraph in late and final drafts. Again the data of the present study and Stalker & Stalker's study are not entirely comparable because the latter analyses non-native speakers' writing. Nonetheless, it is interesting to notice that the fronted evaluation is considered an evolution in English student writing.

Whereas the English texts tend to have a fronted main point which is often taken up again in the final evaluation/conclusion, the Italian texts tend to express the main evaluation as conclusion when the argument has been thoroughly structured and the student can express her answer to the examination task because the evaluation she offers is supported by the whole text. In this latter case, the imposition of the claim on the addresser has already been prepared (and somehow redressed) in the script itself and the evaluation might seem a 'natural' conclusion: it is not imposed on the reader, but 'inevitable'.

Whereas the point the English student makes is often clear from the beginning because it is stated in the premise of the script, the Italian student usually constructs the argument without having specified the point she is arguing. The Italian scripts analysed here are texts which seem to rely more on a reader-responsible attitude, whereas the English scripts show a more writer-responsible attitude (Hinds, 1987). In other words, in the English scripts the students tend to orient more explicitly the reader towards the main point and the main evaluation by explaining from the

beginning what the aim of the text is. In the Italian scripts the students rely more on the reader and the shared knowledge between writer and reader to reach the main point in the conclusion of the script. The wider context of text production, the weight and the contribution of the reader seem to be more relevant to the Italian students: their texts are more context-dependent. The English students, on the contrary, are slightly more context-independent: their texts declare their rhetorical aims more overtly from the very beginning, relying less on the reader's inference and shared knowledge.

The fronted background information in the Italian scripts, used to contextualise the issue, is closer to descriptive or expository writing than to argumentative writing (Section 11.2.1.); this finding would confirm the idea put forward at the beginning of the chapter that there is no clear dichotomy between argumentative and expository or descriptive texts (as Romani, 1992, seems to suggest), but rather a continuum in which one type of writing merges into the other. The descriptive/expository writing of the background in the Italian scripts has the rhetorical aim of convincing the examiner that not only does the student know 'how' to argue (which is the main communicative goal of this text-type), but she also knows 'about' the topic itself. Since the function of the background is not overtly stated and its presence delays the main point, the Italian students rely on the reader's inferencing ability and the shared knowledge between writer and reader. The English scripts, instead, show that the prominence is on the argumentative skill.

The hypotheses made at the beginning of the chapter (Section 11.2.1.) are only partly confirmed. The English texts are more consistently argumentative whereas the Italian texts show an argumentative mode which contains some sections borderline with expository prose. Contrary to the hypothesis, both sets of data are overtly argumentative because the writer's claim is clearly present: the main point is

prominent in both sets, but usually delayed in the Italian scripts and fronted in the English texts.

It is possible to draw the conclusion that expectations in Italian and English argumentative prose are different and in a cross-linguistic setting some misunderstanding might arise. In an English speaking setting, Italian student writing might be perceived as unclear and lacking precise ideas and a rhetorical goal. In an Italian setting, English student argumentation might be perceived as bald, not sufficiently prepared and, therefore, assuming an authority that the student is not supposed to have.

CHAPTER 12

CONCLUSION

12.1. Focus and scope of the study

This study has investigated some of the basic devices which tap into the interpersonal metafunction in the text-type chosen for the data analysis: examination papers about literary subjects written by English and Italian native speakers. The study has been exploratory and has been intended to test the importance of the interpersonal metafunction in a cross-linguistic analysis of English and Italian undergraduate student writing.

In the specific text-type analysed here, the interpersonal metafunction and the devices related to it inform some of the basic conventions of the student discourse and reveal differences and similarities across languages. The interpersonal metafunction relates the propositional content (ideational metafunction) to its textual realisation (textual metafunction) within the specific context of production.

The study has focused on linguistic features relating them to the context of production and its cultural specificity. The basic hypothesis underlying the study has been confirmed by the findings: there are both similarities and variations in comparable text-types across languages; writing conventions stem from cultural practices which show both similarities and differences in the English and Italian data examined in this study. In particular, some of the differences related to the interpersonal metafunction may fuel cross-cultural and cross-linguistic misunderstandings. I use the word misunderstandings rather than errors because they refer to linguistic conventions at the textual and contextual level and can involve both learners and teachers. Cross-linguistic misunderstandings at the level of writing conventions are not easily detectable: they are not due to the

propositional content of the text, which is a central concern of this type of writing, but to the actual relation between the social and discourse roles of the participants, their expectations and their relation to the subject matter.

A related aspect is that writing conventions are engrained in the language through the education system and the culture, and for language users it may be difficult to consider them as culture-specific and context-specific, rather than universally acceptable and the obvious way of encoding knowledge. Conventions, however, may be similarly encoded in different languages: some text-types, such as some branches of scholarly writing, show common traits across languages (Taylor & Tingguan, 1991). The present study focuses both on differences and similarities in student writing in English and Italian.

An issue deriving from the above remarks is the difference between, on the one hand, the thinking processes, the students' ability to perform a task, and, on the other hand, their textual realisation in student writing. Student writing is based on conventions rooted in the language and culture and expressed through a discourse which is characteristically developmental. The thinking process and the ability to perform given tasks are a cognitive process which can only partly be revealed by looking at the resulting written text.

This study has shown that the same text-type can have different textual realisations in different languages: awareness should be raised in order to avoid the fallacy that writing conventions are universally applicable, and the discoursal structures of texts reveal the way people think and are able to broach tasks. Writing conventions, especially in academic and student writing, are so closely intertwined with the thinking process that it is easy to mistake the one for the other. However, as

Bereiter & Scardamalia (1987) remark, the type of thinking process cannot be deduced by just examining the final written product.

The sections that follow will discuss the limitations of the study, its findings, their interpretation and the scope for further research which stemmed from it.

12.2. The limitations of the study

1. Method: the study is exploratory: the framework of analysis has been devised and restructured while the work was in progress, since there was no well-tried existing method of analysis in the field. The choice of some of the linguistic areas of analysis may be controversial because the comparison between the two languages has been rather complex (two particularly controversial areas of analysis are 'impersonal structures' and modality).

2. Type of data: the necessity of using naturally occurring data brought about by the type of research has drawbacks which could not be eliminated and could only be partly controlled (see Chapter 4).

a. The time variable could not be controlled: time constraints were more taxing on English than on Italian students.

b. The examination tasks were worded differently and had different topics (given that the students had to write about literature written in their native language to avoid language interference).

c. There is an imperfect matching of essay length.

d. Only manual analysis could be chosen, given the focus on discoursal features.

This made the data analysis a long recursive process and cross-validation was not a viable choice.

e. The choice of manual analysis meant a more restricted corpus of data and a non statistically analysable quantitative analysis. Quantitative analysis was only used to shed light on general trends and contribute to the qualitative analysis.

12.3. The main questions and the main hypotheses revisited

The main research questions, reported in Section 4.4., are all interlinked and therefore they will be discussed globally. The hypotheses derived from these main questions have been generally confirmed, but the naturally occurring data have offered unexpected insights showing the complexity of the field and the necessity to speak of tendencies rather than clear-cut answers to the questions. The study has explored only a limited section of a field which offers scope for further research or, rather, several lines of possible research. The study has raised new research questions both about the method of analysis and the field of analysis, as explained in Section 6 of this chapter.

The analysis of the interpersonal devices in the data have shown that the Italian and the English students construct different discourse roles for their audience and for themselves as writers. This difference can be related to their social roles and to the relation with the subject matter (literature).

The hypothesis that Italian students would efface their presence as writers in the text more than the English students has been confirmed by the findings. First person deixis has a more limited usage in the Italian student writing and it is often related to a metadiscoursal environment (speech act markers) or it is expressed at the end of the essay when the whole argumentation has been developed. This means that the student feels free to use the first person when dealing with text structuring or when her conclusions about the subject matter have been backed up by the preceding text.

The English students tend to foreground their presence in the text more using first person deixis both in metadiscoursal remarks and also when expressing a value-judgement about the subject matter. The English students seem to have the right to discuss a culturally prestigious subject matter such as literature in a more overt and direct way than the Italian students.

However, the findings show that the situation is more complex and subtle than has been depicted so far. One of the controversial choices of this study has been the method of analysis of what have been generically called 'impersonal structures'. The differences between the two languages are structurally so relevant that the results of a comparison can only be tentative. Chapter 6 shows that, on the whole, Italian students tend to use 'impersonal structures' less than English students. This seems to be counterintuitive, but it is consistent with other unexpected and apparently contradictory findings in the field of evaluation strategies and modality.

As far as evaluation strategies are concerned (Chapter 8), Italian students seem to perceive evaluation of subject matter so high-ranking an imposition on the reader that they try to avoid it altogether and, in so doing, they limit the need for deference politeness (negative politeness). Positive politeness strategies (solidarity politeness) are very few, and bald-on-record remarks are made when their linguistic environment reduces to a minimum the imposition on the reader. Epistemic and root modality, another controversial area of analysis which only yields tentative insights because of the diversity between the two languages, is used in a more limited way by the Italian students, whereas categorical modality seems far more common (Chapter 7).

The English student writers use a wide variety of politeness strategies to redress the imposition of the value-judgement on the reader and solidarity politeness is not rare.

Epistemic and root modality are common and widespread. The ranking of the imposition of value-judgements seems to be perceived as lower by the English students and the discursual distance between the writer and the reader seems to be less wide than for the Italian students.

This would also explain why the use of 'impersonal structures' is more limited in Italian: the students tended to use categorical statements which did not need to be redressed, impersonalised or modalised. This would achieve two main aims: backgrounding the presence of the writer in the script, and maintaining the distance between the student and the subject matter. In order to achieve these aims, however, the students obtain another effect: the implication is that in order to be able to broach the issues at hand the writer has to be part of the prestigious literary community. Since this is not viable for the student, she appropriates the voice of the scholarly community, effacing her own as far as this is possible in the context of production. To do this, she bases her writing on what she has studied, on authoritative voices which can support her argumentation (see Chapter 10), on structuring the text in such a way that the evaluation and main point come usually at the end of the text (Argument - Thesis): a delayed critical viewpoint means that the whole text can support her claim (see Chapter 11).

The Italian student, therefore, apparently assumes a discourse role of reader of literature who subtly (or, rather, unaware) merges or can be confused with that of the critic of literature. This can be seen in her use of deixis and 'impersonal structures' where there is no solution of continuity between the (implied) writer and the community of literary critics (see Section 6.2.3.) and would also explain why solidarity politeness is very rare in the Italian texts. The accepted 'fiction' (or convention) is that she speaks in the voice of the discourse community the reader belongs to and therefore addresses more directly what has been defined as the

'audience invoked' (the scholarly community and the university establishment) than the 'audience addressed' (the examiners).

This implies that the discursual voice of the Italian student in a gatekeeping encounter is once removed from her social role. The student's discourse role is one of 'proponent' both for arguments she actually reports and for the arguments she has thought of herself (a distinction which is almost impossible to make in her writing). In this respect, it is not exactly correct to say that the Italian student 'assumes' the voice of the academic community, in fact she 'reports' that voice and constructs her argumentation with it. This procedure maintains her distance both from the subject matter and the reader. In linguistic terms, this would imply that she can use categorical statements, non-modalised expressions and avoid politeness strategies much more than the members of the scholarly community, but this is a hypothesis that needs to be tested in a study of scholarly writing.

The English student effaces her presence in the text much less (use of person markers, Chapter 5), constructs her discourse role more as a reader of the text than as a critic, tends to establish a direct link with the subject matter giving explicit evaluations and value-judgements redressed with negative and positive politeness strategies, the use of modality and 'impersonal' structures (Chapters 6, 7, 8). In some cases the English student writer establishes a direct, rather informal link with the reader (solidarity or positive politeness, informal expressions, emotive language, addresses to the reader, Chapters 8, 9 and 10).

The distance between writer / subject matter and writer / reader are less wide than for the Italian student, and this allows the English student to argue for her opinion in a more direct way. This tendency seems to influence the overall text-structure as well, since the English students tend to start their argumentation with the main point

and the evaluation of the subject matter, before going on to explaining their viewpoint with supporting arguments (Thesis - Argument).

The English students assume the voice of 'promoters' of their piece of writing and therefore assume more direct personal responsibility for what they write. This would also explain a number of informal expressions in some (not all) of the English scripts which echo informal spoken interaction (Chapter 10). They may be prompted by the interregister interference of the direct face-to-face interaction between the students and the lecturers in tutorials. Some of the English students are not deterred from using some informal expressions even in a gatekeeping encounter, but there are noticeable individual differences in the extent to which informal language is used. It can be hypothesised that the development of the student's competence in writing conventions gradually limits this phenomenon. The tutorial system and the personal interaction between student and lecturer is not typical of the Italian university system which would also partly explain the discourse distance found in the Italian text as reflecting the social distance between Italian students and examiners.

The more prominent use of informal expressions in the English scripts if compared to the Italian scripts (see, in particular, Chapter 10) can yield rather controversial interpretations. First of all, as mentioned above, in British universities the relation between students and lecturers is based on more face-to-face interactions than in Italian universities and social roles might influence discourse roles. Secondly the English students seem to perceive the subject matter (literature) with less awe and reverence than the Italian students and can express themselves in more informal terms. The third explanation refers to one non-controlled variable in the study: the time constraints during examination. The English students have to write faster than the Italian students and this can influence their language. Probably the three points

are interrelated and contribute together to explaining why the English texts have more clearly detectable interregister features than the Italian texts, especially features belonging to spoken informal interaction. It is possible to hypothesise, however, that whereas time constraint is certainly a relevant variable for written production, this cannot explain the whole phenomenon of informal instances of language in the English scripts. Therefore it is possible to confirm (if tentatively) the validity of the hypothesis about the tolerance of interference from other registers: it seems to vary cross-linguistically and it is lower for the Italian students than for the English students, as far as my data are concerned.

It was not possible to investigate other interregister features (such as sources, lectures notes, text books, secondary school essay writing) because of the additional data that this research would have required. Interregister interference and intertextuality are certainly areas which can yield interesting and insightful viewpoints on student writing.

In summary, as far as the data are concerned, the hypothesis about interregister interference set at the beginning of the study can be confirmed, but some clarification has to be made. There is less tolerance of interference from non academic registers in the Italian students' texts and the students seem to feel that they need a higher level of competence in academic conventions before they can express a critical viewpoint about the literary topic they are writing about. Whereas the former point has been confirmed by the data analysis, the latter cannot be supported by enough evidence. To test this second part of the hypothesis, further research needs to be done following a normative approach in order to compare students' performance and examiners' expectations.

12.4. An interpretation

Looking at the data and the findings from a global perspective, it is possible to remark that there is a general tendency in this text-type to have the same argumentative function in both languages encoded in forms and structures which partly differ. In other words, the same argumentative function and the same argumentative goal (to convince the examiner that the formal and content level of competence in arguing about that specific subject, for that specific examination task is above a clear pass) is performed by the students following slightly different writing conventions which influence their written product.

The remarks that follow are based on general trends within the two sets of data, but it is implied throughout that there are individual variations within these broad trends and that the English data have been found less homogeneous than the Italian data for all the linguistic variables. For the scope of the present discussion, however, individual variations are set aside because the two sets of data can be considered as fairly consistent, as the data analysis has shown. It is also possible to remark that the data are a representative sample of this type of examination task in the two languages.

As mentioned before, whereas the global argumentative function and goal of the two sets of texts are the same, their discursual encoding is different because the English texts are more focused on the argumentation as a function and the Italian texts are more focused on the argumentation as content. In the former case the emphasis seems to be on 'how' to argue about a topic, in the latter the emphasis seems to be on 'what' to argue about the topic.

The English students have learnt (in different degrees of competence) how to argue about the topic given as the focus of the examination task. They can be called

'promoters' because their relation with the literary topic is direct and this would explain why the writer often constructs herself as a reader of literature who has an individual viewpoint to express. The developmental quality of their writing implies that in their texts there generally is an unresolved tension between the attempt to adopt the conventions of academic writing ('impersonal' forms, negative politeness, modality, etc.) and the necessity to express their viewpoint and their value-judgement (use of person markers, positive politeness, bald-on-record strategies, evaluative strategies, etc.). This tension appears more clearly when the student's competence in academic writing is lower and her writing is more heterogeneous.

The Italian students operate in a situation which could be said to be 'once removed' from the argumentation of the actual literary topic: their discourse voice mainly reports other people's voices (often literary critics' opinions) and constructs an argumentation with these voices. Their argumentation is therefore not direct: they are 'proponents' because they construct their argumentation using arguments expressed by literary critics. This would explain the fact that the Italian student's discourse role is not clearly distinguished from that of the critics of literature (see the use of first person plural *noi*) and the clearest example of overt evaluation in the Italian texts are related more to the discourse structure than to the subject matter (they often occur in metadiscoursal devices).

Within this interpretation of the finding, it is possible to draw the conclusion that the concepts of evaluating the subject matter and using the sources are rather different in the two sets of data. For the English students the direct evaluation of the subject matter is a core focus of the task; sources can be used, but appropriating them without acknowledgement is blatant plagiarism. For the Italian students personal evaluation is dangerous ground to tread because established authoritative voices are present in her text. These voices contribute to shaping the discourse

community to which the reader / examiner belongs. As far as sources are concerned, the Italian students acknowledge a number of them (see Chapter 10); however, given the underlying conventions of the text-type, the concept of plagiarism is necessarily more relaxed, or, rather, it shifts boundaries. The student is actually allowed (indeed expected) to use voices other than her own to structure the argument; the argumentative text is, nevertheless, her own. She has to demonstrate her competence in using other people's arguments in structuring her own text. Officially she is also entitled to express her personal opinion, but, her own evaluation is difficult to detect for two reasons: this event is quite rare given the authoritative level of content she deals with, and also, when this happens, her voice is backgrounded and her personal appreciation rarely overtly signposted.

The strategies and conventions used by the Italian student also allow her to maintain a distance both from the literary topic and from the audience (addressed and invoked): her own discourse role as 'proponent' is a discourse level between the audience and the student's voice. In an apparently contradictory way, while reporting the voice of the scholarly community she distances her discourse role from it. The English student appropriates some conventions of the argumentative function used by the community and in so doing she directly broaches the literary topic.

The modes of argumentation as explored in this section can be seen in a continuum of registers or modes and related to the semantic levels on a scale of abstraction (Lyons, 1977: 442-443; Grierson, 1944: 21-22). As mentioned in Section 11.2., Lyons categorises physical objects as first order entities, events and processes as second order entities and abstract propositions as third order entities. These three levels can be respectively related to the three modes of discourse: description, narration, argumentation (Mitchell, 1996). As already mentioned, this is theoretically viable, but naturally occurring data often present problems of

categorisation. This is certainly the case with student writing especially in a cross-linguistic perspective. The English texts tend to be argumentative because they deal with propositions, the Italian texts are argumentative but inclusive of expository prose because there is an embedded speech act of reporting in the argumentation ('I argue that critics argue that ...'). As Sweetser says (1990: 79-63), speech acts reporting propositions are borderline between third and second order entities because they are events (acts) but dealing with abstract entities of argumentation. The discoursal world of reported argumentation spans the second and third level of abstraction (see Section 7.5.1 about discoursal and argumentative modality, 9.5.4. about metadiscoursal connectives and 11.2. about modes of discourse).

In conclusion, Italian and English student writing belonging to the same text-type might give rise to different expectations in the reader and follow conventions which might not be recognised as acceptable by a foreign discourse community. The findings of the present study have a limited scope and cannot be generalised, but their interpretation can be related to differences in the academic practice of transmitting knowledge and the relation with tradition in Britain and in Italy. In Britain the university system encourages the expression of individual critical viewpoints and promotes discussion of topics among the students (Atkin *et al.*, 1995). In Italy the emphasis traditionally lies in the study and discussion of authoritative works of scholars who contributed to the literature in the field (Lavinio & Sobrero, 1991).

12.5. The pedagogical relevance of cross-linguistic variation

The conclusion that may be drawn from this study is that neither the conventions followed by the Italian students nor the English students' conventions can be labelled as wrong or lacking in their respective educational settings. Different educational settings have developed a wealth of different ways of encoding and

transmitting knowledge. In a world where the 'Western model' of constructing and reproducing knowledge and culture means far too often 'Anglo-American model', cross-cultural and linguistic diversity should be respected and fostered.

The respect for cultural diversity is a fundamental right common to every individual and discourse community, but there are circumstances where this right has to be balanced with the right the foreign student has to learn new conventions and ways of structuring written texts in the target language.

These two main rights are not always easy to reconcile and bring about more responsibility for the language teacher:

- the respect for the native language and culture of the foreign student;
- the awareness that students should be taught writing conventions and they cannot be expected to acquire them. This is particularly true of text-types like academic writing whose conventions are complex even for native speakers;
- the awareness that when students are unable to tackle the given task, this does not usually mean 'faulty thinking': the difficulty might stem from the developmental quality of student writing but also from mismatched cross-cultural expectations.

As Hargan (1995) remarks, imposing foreign writing rules in some circumstances is counterproductive for the language learner and her academic development. From their experience, Italian university students in an Italian university cannot be expected to reproduce expert norms of written English, given the little exposure they have to the language (especially academic writing), the developmental quality of their English, the fact that probably they will never use English academic writing norms and the difficulty of the subject matter they have to write about.

When the students, however, operate within the foreign discourse community, it seems to me that the respect for their native language and cultural norms should be complemented by their fundamental right to learn the conventions of the discourse community they have to operate in. This sounds commonsensical, but it becomes controversial if related to the complex and sensitive issues of the expansion of English as the language of instruction and world-wide academic writing, the extension of English (or, rather, Anglo-American) conventions to other languages, and the advances of English as a world language (see Phillipson, 1993). In this respect, the fundamental tenet of this study is language diversity as a cultural and human value to preserve and defend.

12.6. Scope for further research

The present study is exploratory in that a framework has been devised for cross-linguistic analysis of discourse features related to the interpersonal metafunction. With some adjustments, the framework could be used for research in the following areas:

1. The analysis could be extended to other text-types. In particular, a cross-linguistic study of scholarly writing about literature could be compared with the findings of this study. L2 academic writing could be also compared to L1 academic writing.
2. An L2 study related to the present research would investigate linguistic aspects which can be potential problems for non-native speaker students writing in a foreign academic setting.
3. Different text-types in student writing could be compared cross-linguistically, and text-types from different school levels could be included.

4. A much larger sample of data would yield statistically analysable results which could be compared to the present mainly qualitative study.

5. A cross-cultural study of intertextuality in student writing could redefine the concepts of use of sources in a cross-cultural perspective. It would also shed light on the relation between the university student and the academic community.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ADAMS Penny, HEATON Brian & HOWARTH Peter (eds). 1991. *Socio-Cultural Issues in English for Academic Purposes*. London: Macmillan.
- ALLWRIGHT Richard. 1984. Why don't Learners Learn What Teachers Teach? - The Interaction Hypothesis. In SINGLETON D.M. & LITTLE D.G. (eds). *Language Learning in Formal and Informal Context*: 3-18. Dublin: I.R.A.A.L.
- ATKIN G., WALSH C., WATKINS S. (eds). 1995. *Studying literature. A Practical Introduction*. N.Y.: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- BACH K. & HARNISH R.M. 1979. *Linguistic Communication and Speech Acts*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- BAKHTIN M. 1981. *The Dialogical Imagination*. ed. HOLOQUIST M. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- 1986. *Speech, Genres and Other Late Essays*. eds. EMERSON C. & HOLQUIST M. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- BARNET Sylvan. 1985 (5th ed.). *A Short Guide to Writing about Literature*. London: Batsford Academic & Educational.
- BARTHOLOMAE David. 1985. Inventing the University. In ROSE Mike (ed.). *When a Writer Can't Write*: 134-165. New York: The Guildford Press.
- BATES Elizabeth. 1976. *Language and Context. The Acquisition of Pragmatics*. N.Y.: Academic Press.
- BATES Elizabeth & BENIGNI Laura. 1975. Rules of address in Italy: a sociological survey. *Language in Society*, 4, 3, 271-288.
- BATTAGLIA S. & PERNICONE V. 1954. *La Grammatica italiana*. Torino: Loescher.
- BAZZANELLA Carla. 1985. L'uso dei connettivi nel parlato: alcune proposte. In FRANCHI DE BELLIS A. & SAVOIA L.M. (eds). *Sintassi e morfologia della lingua italiana d'uso*: 83-94. Roma: Bulzoni.
- 1990. Il passivo: vario e polifunzionale. *Italiano e oltre*. 5, 3: 121-124.
- 1991a. Il passivo personale con e senza cancellazione d'agente: verso un approccio multidimensionale. In GIANNELLI L *et al.* (eds). *Tra rinascimento e strutture attuali*: 373-385. Torino: Rosenberg & Sellier.
- 1991b. *Il passivo nella funzione scritta e orale: forme e funzioni*. In LAVINIO C. & SOBRERO A. (eds): 189-212.
- 1994. 'Modal' Uses of the Italian *Indicativo Imperfetto* in a Pragmatic Perspective. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14: 439-457.
- BEARDSLEY M.C. 1950. *Practical Logic*. N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- de BEAUGRANDE Robert & DRESSLER Wolfgang. 1981. *Introduction to Text-Linguistics*. London: Longman.

- BENSON James & GREAVES William (eds). 1982. *Systemic Perspectives on Discourse*, vol. 1. Norwood: Ablex.
- 1985. *Systemic Perspectives on Discourse*, vol. 2, Norwood: Ablex.
- BERRETTA Monica. 1984. Connettivi testuali in italiano e pianificazione del discorso. In COVERI L. (ed). *Linguistica testuale*. Roma: Bulzoni.
- BERRY Margaret. 1975. *Introduction to Systemic Linguistics*, 2 vols. London: Batsford.
- BEREITER Carl & SCARDAMALIA Marlene. 1987. *The Psychology of Written Composition*. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.
- BENVENISTE Emile. 1966. *Problèmes de linguistique générale*. 2 vols. Paris: Gallimard.
- BERTUCELLI PAPI Marcella. 1989. Avverbi frasali e atteggiamenti del parlante. *Quaderni di Semantica*, 10, 2: 333-358.
- BESNIER Nico. 1994. Involvement in Linguistic Practice: An Ethnographic Appraisal. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 22: 279-299.
- BIBER Douglas. 1988. *Variation Across Speech and Writing*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- BICKNER Robert & PEYASANTIWONG Patcharin. 1988. Cultural Variation in Reflective Writing. In PURVES A. (ed.): 160-174.
- BIERWISCH M. 1980. Semantic Structure and Illocutionary Force. In Searle J.R. *et al. Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics*: 1-35. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- BIZZELL Patricia. 1982. Cognition, Convention, and Certainty: What We Need to Know About Writing. *PRE/TEXT* 3: 213-243.
- 1986. What Happens When Basic Writers Come to College?. *College Composition and Communication*, 37: 249-301.
- 1987. Language and Literacy. In ENOS T. (ed.). *A Source Book for Basic Writing Teachers*: 125-137. New York: Random House.
- BJÖRK Lennart, KNIGHT Michael, WIKBORG Eleanor. 1988. *The Writing Process. Composition Writing for University Students*. Lund: Chartwell-Bratt.
- BLAKEMORE Diane. 1992. *Understanding Utterances*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- BLOOMFIELD Leonard. 1933. *Language*. N.Y.: Holt.
- BLOOR Meriel & BLOOR Thomas. 1991. Cultural expectations and Socio-pragmatic failure in Academic Writing. In ADAMS P. *et al.* (eds): 1-12.
- BLUE G.M. (ed). 1993. *Language Learning and Success: Studying through English*. London: Macmillan.
- BLUM-KULKA Shoshana. 1997. Discourse Pragmatics. In VAN DIJK T. (ed.) 1997b: 38-63.

- BLUM-KULKA Shoshana *et al.* (eds). 1989. *Cross-cultural Pragmatics: Requests and Apologies*. Norwood: Ablex.
- BONDIONI Gianfranco *et al.* 1986. *L'Italiano. Guida alla composizione scritta per la maturità classica*. Milano: CEDIT.
- BOOTH Wayne. 1961. *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.
- BRANDT Deborah. 1986. Text and Context: How Writers Come to Mean. In COUTURE B. (ed.): 93-107.
- BROWN Penelope & LEVINSON Stephen. 1978, 1987 (2nd ed.). *Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- BROWN Gillian & YULE George. 1983. *Discourse Analysis*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- BROWN R. & GILMAN A. 1960 (first publ.). Pronouns of Power and Solidarity. Reprinted in GIGLIOLI P.P. (ed.). 1972: 252-282.
- BÜHLER K. 1934. *Sprachtheorie*. Jena: Fischer Verlag.
- BURZIO Luigi. 1986. *Italian Syntax*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Cambridge International Dictionary of English*. 1995. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- CAFFI Claudia. 1990. Modulazione, mitigazione, litote. In CONTE M.E., GIACALONE-RAMAT A. & RAMAT P. (eds). *Dimensioni della linguistica*: 169-199. Milano: Franco Angeli.
- 1991. Aspetti pragmatici e testuali delle introduzioni a tesi di laurea e specializzazione in materie scientifiche. In LAVINIO & SOBRERO (eds.): 71-98.
- CAFFI Claudia & JANNEY Richard. 1994. Towards a Pragmatics of Emotive Communication. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 22: 325-373.
- CALDAS-COULTHARD Carmen Rosa & COULTHARD Malcolm (eds.). 1995. *Texts and Practices: Readings in Critical Discourse Analysis*. London: Routledge.
- CAMPBELL Cherry. 1990. Writing with Others' Words: Using Background Reading Text in Academic Compositions. In KROLL B.(ed.): 211-230.
- CANDLIN Cristopher. 1981. Discoursal Patterning and the Equalising of Interpretative Opportunity. In SMITH L. (ed.): 166-199.
- 1987. Beyond Description to Explanation in Cross-Cultural Discourse. In SMITH L. (ed.): 22-35.
- CARLSON Sybil. 1988. Cultural Differences in Writing and Reasoning Skills. In PURVES Alan (ed.): 227-260.
- CARSON J., CARRELL P., SILBERSTEIN S., KROLL B., KUEHN P. 1990. Reading-Writing Relationship in First and Second Language. *TESOL Quarterly*, 24, 2: 245-266.

- CARRELL Patricia. 1987. Text as Interaction: Some Implications of Text Analysis and Reading Research for ESL Composition. CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.). 1987: 47-55.
- CARTER Ronald & NASH Walter. 1990. *Seeing Through Language. A Guide to Styles of English Writing*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- CASTELFRANCHI Cristiano & PARISI Domenico. 1976. Towards one *Si*. *Italian Linguistics*, 2: 83-121.
- CHAFE Wallace. 1982. Integration and Involvement in Speaking, Writing, and Oral Literature. In TANNEN D. (ed.): 35-54.
- 1985. Linguistic differences produced by differences between speaking and writing. In OLSON et al. (eds.): 105-123.
- 1986. Evidentiality in English Conversation and Academic Writing. In CHAFE W. & NICHOLS J. (eds.): 261-272.
- CHAFE Wallace & DANIELEWICZ Jane. 1987. Properties of Spoken and Written Language. In HOROWITZ R. & SAMUELS J. (eds.) *Comprehending Oral and Written Language*: 83-113. San Diego: Academic press.
- CHAFE Wallace & NICHOLS J. (eds.). 1986. *Evidentiality: the Linguistic Coding of Epistemology*. Norwood: Ablex.
- CHASE Geoffrey. 1988. Accommodation, Resistance and Politics of Student Writing in Composition. *College Composition and Communication*, 39: 13-22.
- CHOMSKY Noam. 1957. *Syntactic Structures*. The Hague: Mouton.
- 1965. *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*. Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press.
- 1968. *Language and Mind*. N.Y.: Harcourt Brace. Jovanovitch.
- CILIBERTI Anna. 1984. I modali di 'Volition' e di 'Prediction'. Analisi contrastiva con l'italiano e considerazioni didattiche. *Rassegna Italiana di Linguistica Applicata*, 2-3: 1-34.
- CLARK Romy et al. 1987. *Critical Language Awareness*. C.L.S.L., Working Paper Series, 1. Lancaster University.
- 1992. Principles and practice of CLA in the classroom. In FAIRCLOUGH N. (ed.): 117-140.
- CLYNE Michael. 1984. English and German. In KAPLAN R. (ed.). *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, vol. 3: 38-49.
- 1987. Discourse Structures and Discourse Expectations: Implications for Anglo-German Academic Communication in English, in SMITH L. (ed.): 73-83.
- CLYNE Michael, HOEKS Jimmy & KREUTZ H.J. 1988. Cross-cultural responses to academic discourse patterns. *Folia Linguistica*, 22: 457-475.
- COATES Jennifer. 1983. *The Semantics of the Modal Auxiliaries*. London: Croom Helm.
- COLEMAN Hywel. 1991. The Testing of 'Appropriate Behaviour' in Academic Context. In ADAMS et al. (eds): 13-23.

- COLOMBO Adriano. 1990. Come si scrive a scuola. In BANFI E. & CORDIN P. (eds): 427-447. *Storia dell'italiano e forme dell'italianizzazione*. Roma: Bulzoni.
- (ed.) 1992a. *I pro e i contro. Teoria e didattica del testo argomentativo*. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- 1992b. *Il testo argomentativo*. In COLOMBO A. (ed.): 59-84.
- CONNOR Ulla. 1987. Argumentative Patterns in Student Essays: Cross-Cultural Differences. In CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.): 67-70.
- CONNOR Ulla & FARMER Mary. 1990. The Teaching of Topical Structure Analysis as a Revision Strategy for ESL Writers. In KROLL B. (ed.): 120-139.
- CONNOR Ulla & KAPLAN Robert (eds.). 1987. *Writing Across Languages: Analysis of L2 Text*. Reading (Mass.): Addison-Wesley Publishing Company.
- CONNOR Ulla & LAUER Janice. 1988. Cross-Cultural Variation in Persuasive Student Writing. In PURVES A. (ed.): 126-139.
- CONNOR Ulla & McCAGG Peter. 1987. A Contrastive Study of English Expository Prose Paraphrases. In CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.): 73-86.
- CONTE Maria-Elizabeth. 1988. *Condizioni di coerenza. Ricerche di linguistica testuale*. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- COOK Guy. 1989. *Discourse*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- 1994. *Discourse and Literature*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- COULTHARD Malcolm (ed.). 1986. *Talking About Text*. Birmingham: University of Birmingham. English Language Research.
- (ed.). 1994. *Advances in Written Text Analysis*. London: Routledge.
- COUTURE Barbara. 1986a. Effective Ideation in Written Text: A Functional Approach to Clarity and Exigence. In COUTURE B. (ed.): 69-92.
- (ed.). 1986b. *Functional Approaches to Writing. Research Perspectives*. London: Frances Pinter.
- CRISMORE Avon & FARNSWORTH Rodney. 1990. Metadiscourse in Popular and Professional Science Discourse. In NASH (ed.): 118-136.
- CRISMORE Avon, MARKKANEN Raija, STEFFENSEN Margaret S. 1993. Metadiscourse in Persuasive Writing. *Written Communication*, 10, 1: 39-71.
- CRUSE D.A. 1973. Some Thoughts on Agentivity. *Journal of Linguistics*, 9: 11-23.
- CRYSTAL David. 1987. *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language*. Cambridge, C.U.P.
- DEGENHART Elaine & TAKALA Sauli. 1988. Developing a Rating Method for Stylistic Preference: A Cross-Cultural Pilot Study. In PURVES A. (ed.): 79-106.
- DI FEO Maurizio. 1981. Implicazioni pragmatico-testuali sulle modalità. *Studi di Linguistica Teorica e Applicata*, 10: 327-345.

- VAN DIJK Teun A. 1977. *Text and Context*. London: Longman.
- 1980. *Macrostructures*. Hillsdale: L.E.A.
- 1981. *Studies in the Pragmatics of Discourse*. The Hague: Mouton.
- (ed.) 1985. *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, 4 volumes. London: Academic Press.
- (ed.) 1997a. *Discourse as Structure and Process. Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. vol. 1. London: Sage.
- (ed.) 1997b. *Discourse as Social Interaction. Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*. vol. 2. London: Sage.
- 1997c. Discourse as Interaction in Society. In VAN DIJK (ed.). 1997b: 1-37.
- DIXON Richard. 1991. *A New Approach to English Grammar, on Semantic Principles*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- DUDLEY-EVANS Tony. 1986. Genre Analysis: An Investigation of the Introduction and Discussion Sections of MSc Dissertations. In COULTHARD M. (ed): 128-145.
- DUSKOVA Libuse. 1971. On Some Fundamental and Stylistic Aspect of the Passive Voice in Present-day English. *Philologica Pragensia*: 117-143.
- DUSZAK Anna. 1994. Academic Discourse and Intellectual Styles. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 21: 291-313.
- ECO Umberto. 1977. *Come si fa una tesi di laurea*. Milano: Bompiani.
- EDE Lisa & LUNDSFORD Andrea. 1984. Audience Addressed / Audience Invoked: The Role of the Audience in Composition Theory and Pedagogy. *College Composition and Communication*, 35, 2: 155-171.
- E.Di.S.U. Napoli 2. 1995. *Strumenti e principi di metodo per la ricerca culturale e letteraria*. Napoli: Istituto Universitario Orientale.
- VAN EEMEREN Frans & GROOTENDORST Rob. 1992. *Argumentation, communication and fallacies*. Lawrence Erlbaum.
- 1995. Argumentation Theory. In VERSCHUEREN J. *et al.* (eds): 55-61.
- VAN EEMEREN Frans, GROOTENDORST Rob & KRUIGER Tjiark. 1987. *Handbook of Argumentation Theory*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.
- VAN EEMEREN Frans, GROOTENDORST Rob, JACKSON Sally & JACOBS Scott. 1997. Argumentation. In VAN DIJK T. (ed). 1997a: 208-229.
- EGGINS Susan & MARTIN J.R. 1997. Genres and Registers of Discourse. In VAN DIJK (ed.) 1997a: 230-256.
- EGGINGTON W.G. 1987. Written Academic Discourse in Korean. In CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.): 153-168.
- EILER Mary Ann. 1983. Meaning and Choice in Writing About Literature. In FINE J. & FREEDLE R.O. *Developmental Issues in Discourse*: 169-223. Norwood: Ablex.

- ELLERO Paola. 1986. I connettivi. In CARGNEL Silvia *et al.* (eds). *Prospettive didattiche della linguistica del testo*: 77-97. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- ELLIS R. & HOPKINS C. 1985. *How to Succeed in Written Work and Study*. London: Collins.
- ENKVIST Nils Eric. 1987. Text Linguistics for the Applier: An Orientation. In CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.): 43-23.
- FABB Nigel & DURANT Alan. 1993. *How to Write Essays, Dissertations and Theses in Literary Studies*. London: Longman.
- FAIRCLOUGH Norman. 1988. Register, power and socio-semantic change. In BIRCH P. & O'TOOLE M. (eds.). *Functions in Style*: 111-125. London: Pinter Publishers.
- Norman. 1989. *Language and Power*. London: Longman.
- (ed.). 1992a. *Critical Language Awareness*. London: Longman.
- 1992b. *Discourse and Social Change*. London: Polity Press.
- FAIRCLOUGH Norman & WODAK Ruth. 1997. Critical Discourse Analysis. In VAN DIJK T. (ed.). 1997b: 258-284.
- FELLIN Luciana & PUGLIESE Rosa. 1992. I connettivi e i segnali discorsivi nell'apprendimento dell'italiano per scopi accademici in studenti di scambio internazionale. In GIACALONE RAMAT Anna & VEDOVELLI Massimo (eds). *Italiano lingua seconda / lingua straniera*: 379-389. Roma: Bulzoni.
- FISH Stanley. 1980. *Is There a Text in This Class?* Cambridge: C.U.P.
- FLOWER L. 1985. *Problem-Solving Strategies for Writing*. 2nd ed. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- FLOWER Linda & HAYES John. 1980. The Cognition of Discovery: Defining a Rhetorical Problem. *College Composition and Communication*, 31: 21-32.
- 1981. A cognitive process theory of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 32: 365-378.
- FOWLER Roger. 1981. *Literature as Social Discourse*. London: Batsford Academic and Educational.
- FOWLER Roger *et al.* (eds). 1979. *Language and Control*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- FOGARASI Miklós. 1983. *Grammatica italiana del Novecento*. 2nd ed. Roma: Bulzoni.
- FORNACIARI Raffaello. 1881, reprint: 1974. *Sintassi italiana dell'uso moderno*. Firenze: Sansoni.
- FRANK Jane. 1990. You Call That a Rhetorical Question? Forms and Functions of Rhetorical Questions in Conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14: 723-738.
- FRANCIS G. 1986. *Anaphoric Nouns*. Discourse Analysis Monograph No. 11. Birmingham: English Language Research. University of Birmingham.

- FRASER Bruce. 1990. Perspectives on Politeness. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14: 219-236.
- FRIEDLANDER Alexander. 1990. Composing in English: Effects of a First Language on Writing in English as a Second Language. In KROLL B. (ed.): 109-125.
- GALETTO Pia. 1991. 'Essere' nell'uso assoluto e nella diatesi verbale. Confronto interlinguistico. *Studi Italiani di linguistica teorica e applicata*, 20, 3: 459-506.
- GIACALONE RAMAT Anna. 1995. Function and Form of Modality in Learner Italian. In GIACALONE RAMAT A. & CROCCO GALEAS G. (eds.). *From Pragmatics to Syntax. Modality in Second Language Acquisition*: 269-293. Tübingen: Verlag.
- GIGLIOLI Pier Paolo (ed.). 1972. *Language and Social Context*. London: Penguin.
- GIVÓN Talmy (ed.). 1979. *Syntax and Semantics. Discourse and Syntax*. vol. 12. New York: Academic Press.
- 1981. Typology and Functional Domains. *Studies in Language*, 5: 163-190.
- GODDARD Cliff & WIERZBICKA Anna. 1997. Discourse and culture. In VAN DIJK T. (ed.) 1997b: 231- 257.
- GOBBER Giovanni. 1988. Presupposizione e domande. In RIGOTTI E. & CIPOLLI C. (eds) *Ricerche di semantica testuale: 138-155*. Brescia: La Scuola.
- GOFFMAN E. 1967. *Interaction Ritual*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday.
- GRABE William. 1987. Contrastive Rhetoric and Text-Type Research. In CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.): 115-137.
- GRANGER Sylviane. 1983. *To be + Past Participle Construction in Spoken English, with Special Emphasis on the Passive*. Amsterdam: North Holland
- GREGORY Michael. 1987. Meta-functions: aspects of their development, status and use in systemic linguistics. In M.A.K. HALLIDAY & FAWCETT R.P. (eds). *New Developments in Linguistics*, vol.1: 94-106. London: Frances Pinter.
- GRICE Paul. 1975. Logic in Conversation. In COLE P. & MORGAN J. (eds). *Syntax and Semantics 3: Speech Acts*: 41-58. N.Y.: Academic Press.
- GRIMES J.E. 1975. *The Thread of Discourse*. The Hague: Mouton.
- GRIERSON H.J.C. 1944. *Rhetoric and English Composition*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd.
- GUDYKUNST William B. & TING-TOOMEY Stella. 1988. *Interpersonal Communication*. London: Sage Publications.
- GUMPERZ John. 1968. The Speech Community. Reprinted in GIGLIOLI P.P. (ed.). 1972. *Language and Social Context*: 219-231. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- 1982. *Language and Social Identity*. Cambridge: C.U.P.

- HALL Chris. 1990. Managing the Complexity of Revising Across Languages. *TESOL Quarterly*, 24, 1: 43-60.
- HALL E.T. 1976. *Beyond Culture*. N.Y.: Doubleday.
- HALLIDAY M.A.K. 1970. Language Structure and Language Function. In LYONS J. (ed.). *New Horizons in Linguistics*, vol 1: 140-165. London: Penguin.
- 1973. *Explorations in the Functions of Language*. London: Edward Arnold.
- 1976. Modality and Modulation in English. In KRESS G.R. (ed). *Halliday: System and Function in Language*: 189-213. Oxford: O.U.P.
- 1978. *Language as Social Semiotic*. London: Edward Arnold.
- 1979. Modes of Meaning and Modes of Expression. In ALLERTON D.J., CARNEY E. & HOLDCROFT D. (eds.). *Function and Context in Linguistic Analysis*: 57-79. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- 1985, 1994 (2nd ed.) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. London: Edward Arnold.
- 1989. (2nd ed.). *Spoken and Written Language*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- HALLIDAY M.A.K. & HASAN Ruqaiya. 1976. *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman.
- 1989. *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- HAMP-LYONS Liz. 1988. The product before: Task-related influences on the writer. In ROBINSON P. (ed): 35-46.
- HARE V., RABINOWITZ M., SCHIEBLE K. 1989. Text Effect on Main Idea Comprehension. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 24, 1: 72-88.
- HARGAN Noeleen. 1995. Misguided expectations: EFL teachers' attitudes towards Italian university students' written work. *Language and Education*, 9, 4: 223-232.
- HARRIS Joseph. 1989. The idea of community in the study of writing. *College Composition and Communication*, 40, 1, 11-22.
- HASAN Ruqaiya. 1989. *Linguistics, Language and Verbal Art*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- HEATH Shirley Brice. 1983. *Ways with Words*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- HINDS John. 1987. Reader Versus Writer Responsibility: A New Typology. In CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.): 141-152.
- HINKEL Eli. 1997. Indirectness in L1 and L2 academic writing. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 27: 361-386.
- HODGE Robert & KRESS Gunther. 1988. *Social Semiotics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- 1993. *Language as Ideology*. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.
- HOEY Michael. 1979. *Signalling in Discourse*. University of Birmingham: English Language Research.
- 1983. *On the Surface of Discourse*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- 1986. Overlapping Patterns of Discourse Organisation and Their Implications for Clause Relational Analysis of Problem-Solution Texts. In COOPER C.R. &

- GREENBAUM S. *Studying Writing: Linguistic Approaches*: 187-214. London: Sage.
- 1991. *Patterns of Lexis in Text*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- 1994. Signalling in Discourse: a functional analysis of a common pattern in written and spoken English. In COULTHARD M. (ed.): 26-45.
- HOFMANN T.R. 1976. Past tense and the modal system. In McCAWLEY J.D. (ed.). *Syntax and Semantics*, 7. N.Y.: Academic Press.
- HOLMES Janet. 1983. Speaking English with the appropriate degree of conviction. In BRUMFIT C. (ed.). *Learning and Teaching Languages for Communication. Applied Linguistics Perspective*: 110-113. London: C.I.L.T.
- 1984. Modifying Illocutionary Force. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 8: 345-365.
- 1988. Doubt and certainty in ESL textbook. *Applied Linguistics*, 9, 1, 21-44.
- HOLUB R.C. 1984. *Reception Theory. A Critical Introduction*. London: Methuen.
- HOUGHTON D. & HOEY M. 1984. Linguistics and Written Discourse: Contrastive Rhetorics. In KAPLAN R. (ed.). *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 3: 2-22.
- HOROWITZ Daniel. 1986a. Process, not Product: Less Than Meets the Eye. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20, 1: 141-144.
- 1986b. What Professors Actually Require: Academic Tasks for the ESL Classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, 20: 445-442.
- HUDDLESTON Rodney. 1984. *Introduction to the Grammar of English*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- 1988. *English Grammar: An Outline*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- HUDSON R.A. 1980. *Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- HYMES Dell. 1972. Models of interaction of language and social life. In GUMPERZ J.J. & HYMES D. (eds). *Directions in Sociolinguistics*: 5-71. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- 1974. *Foundations in Sociolinguistics: an Ethnographic Approach*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- INDRASUTRA Chantanee. 1988. Narrative Styles in the Writing of Thai and American Students. In PURVES A. (ed.): 206-226.
- IRMSCHER William F. 1981 (3rd ed.). *The Holt Guide to English*. N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- ITALIANO ANZILOTTI Gloria. 1982. The Rhetorical Question as an Indirect Speech Act Device in English and Italian. *Canadian Modern Language Review*, 38: 290-302.
- IVANIC Roz. 1988. *Critical language Awareness in Action*. C.L.S.L., Working Paper Series, 6, Lancaster University.
- IVANIC Roz & SIMPSON John. 1992. Who's who in academic writing? In FAIRCLOUGH N. (ed.): 141-173.

- JAKOBSON R. 1960. Closing statement: Linguistics and Poetics. In SEBEOK T.A. (ed.). *Style in Language*: 350-377. Camb., Mass.: MIT Press.
- JAMES Carl. 1980. *Contrastive Linguistics*. Longman: London.
- JAMES Kenneth. 1993. Helping Students to Achieve Success in the Information Structuring of their Academic Essays. In BLUE G.M. (ed.): 95-104.
- JANNEY Richard & ARNDT Horst. 1993. Universality and Relativity in cross-cultural politeness research: A historical perspective. *Multilingua*, 12: 7-34.
- JESPERSEN Otto. 1924. *The Philosophy of Grammar*. London: Allen and Unwin.
- JOHNS Ann M. 1990. L1 Composition Theories: Implications for Developing Theories of L2 Composition. In KROLL B. (ed.): 24-36.
- JONES S. & TETROE J. 1987. Composing in a Second Language. In MATSUHASHI A. (ed.). *Writing in Real Time*: 34-57. N.Y.: Longman.
- JORDAN Michael P. 1984. *Rhetoric of Everyday English Texts*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- JORDAN R.R. 1990. *Academic Writing Course*. London: Collins ELT.
- KACHRU Yamuna. 1988. Writers in Hindi and English. In PURVES A. (ed.): 109-137.
- KAPLAN Robert. 1966. Cultural Thought Patterns in Intercultural Education. *Language Learning*, 16: 1-20.
- 1972. *The Anatomy of Rhetoric*. Philadelphia: Heinle & Heinle.
- 1987. Cultural Thought Patterns Revisited. In CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.): 9-21.
- 1988. Contrastive Rhetoric and Second Language Learning: Notes Toward a Theory of Contrastive Rhetoric. In PURVES A.(ed.): 275-304.
- KASPER Gabriele. 1992. Pragmatic Transfer. *Second Language Research*, 8,3: 203-231.
- KEENAN E.O. & SCHIEFFELIN B. 1976. Topic as a discourse notion. In LI C.N. (ed.). *Subject and Topic*: 335-384 N.Y.: Academic Press.
- KIENPOINTER Manfred. 1987. The Pragmatics of Argumentation. In BERTUCELLI-PAPI M. & VERSCHUEREN J. (eds). *The Pragmatic Perspective*: 277-288. Amsterdam: Benjamin.
- KIRSCH Gesa & ROEN Duane (eds.). 1990. *A Sense of Audience in Written Communication*. London: Sage.
- KITAGAWA Chisato & LEHRER Adrienne. 1990. Impersonal Uses of Personal Pronouns. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 14: 739-759.
- KOPPERSCHIDT Joseph. 1985. An Analysis of Argumentation. In VAN DIJK (ed), vol 2: 159-168.

- KRESS Gunther. 1989. *Linguistic Processes in Sociocultural Practice*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- KRESS Gunther & THREADGOLD Terry. 1988. Towards a Social Theory of Genre. *Southern Review*, 21: 214-243.
- KRISTEVA J. 1986. Word, Dialogue in the Novel. In MOI T. (ed.) *The Kristeva Reader*: 34-61. Oxford: Blackwell.
- KROLL Barbara (ed.). 1990. *Second Language Writing*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- KROLL Barry. 1984. Writing for Readers: Three Perspectives on Audience. *College Composition and Communication*, 35: 172-185.
- LABERGE Suzanne & SANKOFF Gillan. 1979. 'Anything you can do'. In GIVON Talmy (ed.): 419-440.
- LABOV William. 1966. *The Social Stratification of English in New York City*. Washington: Centre for Applied Linguistics.
- LADO Robert. 1957. *Linguistics Across Cultures*. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press.
- LA FAUCI Nunzio. 1985. Passivo e intransitivi. In FRANCHI DE BELLIS A. & SAVOIA M. (eds.). *Sintassi e morfologia della lingua italiana d'uso. Teorie e applicazioni descrittive*: 333-343. Roma: Bulzoni.
- LAKOFF Robin. 1973. The Logic of Politeness: or, minding your p's and q's. In CORUM C. et al. (eds.). *Papers from the Ninth Regional Meeting of the Chicago Linguistic Society*: 292-305. Chicago: Linguistic Society.
- LAUTAMATTI L. 1978. Observations on the development of the topic in simplified discourse. In KOHONEN V. & ENKVIST N.E. *Text Linguistics, Cognitive Learning and Language Teaching*. Publications de l'Association Finlandaise de Linguistique Appliquee No. 22. Turku: AFinLa: 71-104. Reprinted in CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R (eds). 1987.: 87-114.
- LAVINIO Cristina & SOBRERO Alberto (eds.). 1991. *La lingua degli studenti universitari*. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- LEECH Geoffrey. 1983. *Principles of Pragmatics*, London: Longman.
- LEECH Geoffrey & SHORT Michael. 1981. *Style in Fiction*. London: Longman.
- LEECH Geoffrey & SVARTVIK Jan. 1975. *A Communicative Grammar of English*. London: Longman.
- LEKI Ilona. 1991. Twenty-Five Years of Contrastive Rhetoric: Text Analysis and Writing Pedagogies. *TESOL Quarterly*, 25, 1: 123-143.
- LECKIE-TARRY Helen (edited by David BIRCH). 1995. *Language and Context: A Functional Linguistic Theory of Register*. London: Pinter.
- LEPSCHY Giulio. 1976. Two Observations on Castelfranchi & Parisi 'Towards one Si'. *Italian Linguistics*, 2: 157-160.

- 1978. Alcune costruzioni con *si*. In *Saggi di linguistica italiana*: 31-39. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- 1986. Aspects of Italian Construction with *si*. *The Italianist*, 6: 139-151.
- LEPSCHY Anna Laura & LEPSCHY Giulio. 1981. *La lingua italiana*. Milano: Bompiani.
- LESINA Roberto. 1986. *Il manuale di stile*. Bologna: Zanichelli.
- LEVINSON Stephen. 1983. *Pragmatics*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- LEWIS Anna. 1997. Arcane and Disabling. *The Times Higher*, April 4, 1997.
- LO CASCIO Vincenzo. 1974. Alcune strutture della frase impersonale italiana. In MEDICI M. & SANGREGORIO A. (eds): 167-195. *Fenomeni morfologici e sintattici dell'italiano contemporaneo*. Roma: Bulzoni.
- 1991. *La Grammatica dell'Argomentare*. Firenze: La Nuova Italia.
- LONG Russell. 1990. The Writer's Audience: Fact or Fiction?. In KIRSCH g. & ROEN D. (eds.): 78-84.
- LONGACRE Robert. 1979. The paragraph as a grammatical unit. In GIVÓN T. (ed.): 115-134.
- 1983. *The Grammar of Discourse*. New York Plenum Press.
- LYONS John. 1977. *Semantics*. 2 vols. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- 1981. *Language and Linguistics*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- 1995. *Linguistic Semantics. An Introduction*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- MCCARTHY Michael. 1993. Spoken Discourse Markers in Written Text. In SINCLAIR J. et al. (ed.). *Techniques of Description. Spoken and Written Discourse*: 170-182. London: Routledge.
- MCCARTHY Michael & CARTER Ronald. 1994. *Language as Discourse: Perspectives for Language Teaching*. London: Longman.
- MCKINLAY K. 1984. *An analysis of discussion sections in medical journal articles*. Unpublished M.A. dissertation. University of Birmingham, UK.
- MANN William & THOMPSON Sandra. 1986. Relational Propositions in Discourse. *Discourse processes*, 9: 57-90.
- 1987. *Rhetorical Structure Theory: A Theory of Text Organization*. University of Southern California: Information Sciences Institute.
- 1988. Rhetorical Structure Theory: Towards a Functional Theory of Text Organisation. *Text*, 8,3: 243-281.
- (eds.). 1992. *Discourse Description*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- MANZINI Maria Rita. 1986. On Italian *si*. In BORER Hagit (ed.). *Syntax and Semantics*, vol 19: Orlando: Academic Press.
- MARTIN James E. 1992. *Towards a Theory of Text for Contrastive Rhetoric*. N.Y.: Peter Lang.

- MARTIN J.R. 1985. *Factual Writing: Exploring and Challenging Social Reality*. Victoria: Deakin Univ. Press.
- 1992. *English Text. System and Structure*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- MATALENE Carolyn. 1985. Contrastive rhetoric: An American writing teacher in China. In *College English*, 47, 8: 789-808.
- MAURANEN Anna. 1993. *Cultural Differences in Academic Rhetoric*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- 1996. Discourse Competence - Evidence from Thematic Development in Native and Non-Native Texts. In VENTOLA E. & MAURANEN A. (eds): 195-230
- MEY Jakob. 1994 (revised ed.). *Pragmatics: An Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- MEYER Bonnie J.F. 1985. Prose analysis: purposes, procedures, and problems. In BRITTON B.K. & BLACK J.B. (eds): 11-64. *Understanding Expository Text*. Hillsdale: L.E.A.
- MIGLIORINI Bruno. 1960. *Storia della lingua italiana*. Firenze: Sansoni.
- MITCHELL Keith. 1988. Modals. In BALD W.D. (ed.) *Kernprobleme der englischen Grammatik*: 173-191. Munich: Langenscheidt-Longman.
- 1996. *Description, Narration, Argumentation: some thoughts on the semantic characterisation of 'modes of discourse'*. Unpublished seminar hand-out. University of Edinburgh.
- MOHAN B.A. & LO W.A.Y. 1985. Academic Writing and Chinese students: Transfer and Developmental Factors. *TESOL Quarterly*, 19, 3: 515-533.
- VAN MOLLE-MARECHAL. 1974. 'Andare' e 'venire' ausiliari del passivo. In MEDICI M. & SANGREGORIO A. (eds.): 357-372. *Fenomeni Morfologici e sintattici dell'italiano contemporaneo*. Roma: Bulzoni.
- MORROW Philip R. 1989. Conjunct Use in Business News Stories and Academic Journal Articles: A Comparative Study. *English for Special Purposes*, 8: 239-254.
- MORTARA GARAVELLI B. 1988. *Manuale di retorica*. Milano: Bompiani.
- MOSENTHAL Peter B. 1985. Defining the expository discourse. *Poetics*: 387-414.
- MYERS Greg. 1989. The pragmatics of politeness in scientific articles. *Applied Linguistics*, 10, 1-35.
- NAPOLI Donna Jo. 1976. At Least Two si's. *Italian Linguistics*, 2: 125-148.
- NASH Walter (ed.). 1990. *The Writing Scholar. Studies in Academic Discourse*. London: Sage Publications.
- O'BRIEN Teresa. 1992. *Writing for Continuous Assessment and in Examination Conditions: a Comparison of Undergraduate Performance*. Ph.D. Thesis. University of Manchester.
- 1995. Rhetorical Structure Analysis and the Case of Inaccurate, Incoherent Source-hopper. *Applied Linguistics*, 16,4: 442-482.

- ODLIN Terence. 1989. *Language Transfer*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- O'KEEFE Barbara & DELIA Jesse. 1988. Communicative Tasks and Communicative Practice: The Development of Audience-Centred Message Production. In RAFOTH B. & RUBIN D. (eds.): 70-98.
- OLSON David, TORRANCE Nancy & HILDYARD Angela. 1985. *Literacy, Language and Learning*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- ONG Walter. 1975. The Writer's Audience is Always a Fiction. *PMLA*, 90: 9-21.
- OSTLER Shirley. 1987. English in Parallels: A Comparison of English and Arabic Prose. In CONNOR U. & KAPLAN R. (eds.): 169-180.
- PALMER F.R. 1979. 2nd ed. 1990. *Modality and the English Modals*. London: Longman.
- 1986. *Mood and Modality*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- VAN PEER Willy. 1990. Writing as an Institutional Practice. In NASH W. (ed.): 192-204
- PERELMAN C. & OLBRECHTS-TYTECA L. 1958. *La nouvelle rhétorique*. Bruxelles: Univ. de Bruxelles.
- 1969. *The New Rhetoric*. Univ. of Notre Dame Press.
- PERKINS M.R. 1983. *Modal Expressions in English*. London: Frances Pinter.
- PERY-WOODLEY M.P. 1989. *Textual Designs: Signalling Coherence in First and Second Language Academic Writing*. Ph.D. Thesis. Lancaster University.
- PETERS Pamela. 1986. Getting the Theme Across: A Study of Dominant Functions in the Academic Writing of University Students. In COUTURE B. (ed.): 169-185.
- 1988. *Strategies for Student Writers*. Brisbane: John Wiley & Sons.
- PHELPS Louise W. 1990. Audience and Authorship: The Disappearing Boundary. In KIRSCH G. & ROEN D. (eds.): 153-174.
- PHILLIPSON Robert. 1992. *Linguistic Imperialism*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- PORTER James E. 1986. Intertextuality and the Discourse Community. *Rhetoric Review*, 5,1: 34-43.
- PRINCE Ellen, FRADER Joel & BOSK Charles. 1982. On Hedging in Physician-Physician Discourse. In DI PIETRO R.J. (ed.) *Linguistics and the Professions*: 83-97. Norwood: Ablex.
- PURVES Alan. 1986. Rhetorical Communities, the International Student, and Basic Writing. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 5, 1: 38-51.
- (ed.). 1988a. *Writing Across Languages and Cultures. Issues in Contrastive Rhetoric*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- 1988b. Introduction. In PURVES A. (ed.): 9-21.

- PURVES Alan & PURVES William. 1986. Viewpoints: Cultures, Text Models, and the Activity of Writing. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 20, 2: 174-197.
- QUIRK Randolph, GREENBAUM S., LEECH G. & SVARTVIK J. 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.
- RAFOTH Bennett. 1988. Discourse Community: Where Writers, Readers, and Texts Come Together. In RAFOTH B. & RUBIN D. (eds.): 131-145.
- 1990. The Concept of Discourse Community: Descriptive and Explanatory Adequacy. In KIRSCH G. & ROEN D. (eds.): 140-152.
- RAFOTH Bennett & RUBIN Donald (eds). 1988. *The Social Construction of Written Communication*. Norwood: Ablex.
- RAYNAUD Savina. 1992. Su alcune funzioni pragmatiche dei verbi modali. In GOBBER G. (ed.). *La Linguistica pragmatica*: 125-140. Roma: Bulzoni.
- RÉGENT O. 1985. A Comparative approach to the learning of specialised written discourse. In RILEY P. (ed.): 103-120.
- REGULA M. & JERNEJ J. 1965. *Grammatica italiana descrittiva*. Bern: Verlag.
- REID Joy. 1990. Responding to Different Topic Types: a Quantative Analysis from a Contrastive Rhetoric Perspective. In KROLL B. (ed.): 191-210.
- RENZI Lorenzo (ed.). 1988. *Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione*, vol.1. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- 1993. La deissi personale e il suo uso sociale. *Studi di Grammatica italiana*, XV, Firenze, 347-390.
- RENZI Lorenzo & SALVI Giampaolo (eds.). 1991. *Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione*, vol. 2. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- RENZI Lorenzo, SALVI Giampaolo & CARDINALETTI Anna. 1995. (eds.) *Grande Grammatica italiana di consultazione*, vol. 3. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- RESCHER N. 1968. *Topics in Philosophical Logic*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- RICHARDS Keith and SKELTON John. 1991. How critical can you get?. In ADAMS P. *et al.* (eds): 24-40.
- RILEY Philip (ed.) 1985. *Discourse and Learning*. London: Longman.
- ROBINSON Pauline (ed.). 1988. *Academic Writing: Process and Product*. Modern English Publications in association with the British Council.
- ROHLFS Gerhard. 1968. *Grammatica storica della lingua italiana e dei suoi dialetti*. Morfologia, vol. 2. Torino: Einaudi.
- ROMAINE Suzanne. 1982. What is a Speech Community? In ROMAINE S. (ed.). *Sociolinguistic Variation in Speech Communities*: 13-24. London: Edward Arnold.

- ROMANI Werther. 1992. Tipologia testuale e testo argomentativo. In COLOMBO A. (ed.): 11-58.
- ROTHERY Joan. 1985. Two varieties of writing: Report and Exposition. In J.R. MARTIN: 71-82.
- ROWE KRAPELS Alexandra. 1990. An Overview of Second Language Writing Process Research. In KROLL B. (ed.): 37-58.
- RUBIN Donald. 1988. Introduction: Four Dimensions of Social Construction in Written Communication. In RAFOTH B. & RUBIN D. (eds.): 1-33.
- SALAGER-MEYER Francoise. 1994. Hedges and Textual Communicative Function in Medical English Written Discourse. *English for Specific Purposes*, 13, 2: 149-170.
- SCARDAMALIA Marlene & BEREITER Carl. 1987. Knowledge telling and knowledge transforming in written composition. In ROSENBERG S. (ed.). *Advances in Applied Psycholinguistics*, vol. 2: 142-173. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- SCOLLON Ron & SCOLLON Suzanne. 1983. Face in interethnic communication. In RICHARDS J.C. & SCHMIDT R.W. (eds.). 1983. *Language and Communication*: 156-190. London: Longman.
- 1995. *Intercultural Communication*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- SEARLE J.R. 1969. *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- SERAFINI Maria Teresa. 1985. *Come si fa un tema in classe*. Milano: Bompiani.
- SERIANNI Luca. 1988. *Grammatica italiana. Italiano comune e italiano letterario. Suoni, forme e costrutti*. Torino: U.T.E.T.
- SHERMAN Jane. 1992. Your own thoughts in your own words. *ELT Journal*, 46, 2: 190-198.
- SIEWIERSKA A. 1984. *The Passive. A Comparative Linguistic Analysis*. London: Croom Helm.
- SILVA Tony. 1990. Second Language Composition Instruction: developments, issues, and directions in ESL. In KROLL B. (ed.): 11-23.
- SIMONE Raffaele. 1990. *Fondamenti di linguistica*. Roma: Laterza.
- SIMPSON Paul. 1990. Modality in Literary-Critical Discourse. In NASH (ed.): 63-94.
- SINCLAIR John. 1983. Planes of Discourse. In RIZVI S.N.A. (ed). *The Twofold Voice: Essays in Honour of Ramesh Mohan*: 70-89. Salzburg: Universitat Salzburg.
- SKELTON John. 1988. The Care and Maintenance of Hedges. *ELT Journal*, 42,1: 37-43.

- SMITH Edward. 1986. Achieving impact through the interpersonal component. In COUTURE B. (ed.): 108-119.
- SMITH Larry (ed.). 1981. *English for Cross-cultural Communication*. London: Macmillan.
- 1987. *Discourse Across Cultures*. London: Prentice Hall.
- SMITH Mike & SMITH Glenda. 1990. *A Study Skill Handbook*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- SÖTER Anna. 1988. The Second Language Learner and Transfer in Narration. In PURVES A. (ed.): 177-205.
- SPERBER Dan & WILSON Deirdre. 1986, 1995 (2nd ed.). *Relevance. Communication and Cognition*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- STALKER Jacqueline & STALKER James. 1989. The Acquisition of rhetorical strategies in introductory paragraphs in written academic English: A comparison of NNSs and NSs. In GASS et al. (eds). *Variation in Second Language Acquisition Discourse and Pragmatics*: 144-152. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- STAMMERJOHANN Harro (ed.). 1986. *Tema-Rema in italiano*. Tübingen: Narr.
- STATI Sorin. 1982. Le frasi interrogative retoriche. *Lingua e stile*, 17, 2: 195-207.
- STERN H.H. 1983. *Fundamental Concepts of Language Teaching*. Oxford: O.U.P.
- STEVENS Robert J. 1988. Effects on strategy training on the identification of the main idea of expository passages. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 80, 1: 21-26.
- STUBBS Michael. 1986. A Matter of Prolonged Fieldwork: Notes Towards a Modal Grammar of English. *Applied Linguistics*, 7, 1: 1-25.
- SVARTVIK Jan. 1966. *On Voice in the English Verb*. The Hague: Mouton.
- SWALES John. 1981. *Aspects of article introductions*. Birmingham, UK: The University of Aston, Language Studies Unit.
- 1990. *Genre Analysis*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- SWEETSER Eve. 1982. Root and epistemic modals: causality in two worlds. In *Proceedings of the 8th Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistic Society*: 484-507.
- 1990. *From Etymology to Pragmatics: Metaphorical and Cultural Aspects of Semantic Structure*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- TANNEN Deborah (ed.). 1982a. *Spoken and Written Language: Exploring Orality and Literacy*. Norwood: Ablex.
- 1982b. The Oral/Literate Continuum in Discourse. In TANNEN D. (ed.): 1-16.
- 1985a. Relative focus on involvement in oral and written discourse. In OLSON et al. (eds.): 124-147.
- 1985b. Cross-cultural communication. In VAN DIJK T. (ed.): 203-215.

- TAYLOR Gordon & TINGGUAN Chen. 1991. Linguistic, cultural and subcultural issues in contrastive discourse analysis: Anglo-American and Chinese scientific texts. *Applied Linguistics*, 12,3: 319-335.
- TEKAVCIC Pavao. 1972. *Grammatica storica dell'italiano. Morfosintassi*, vol 2. Bologna: Il Mulino.
- THOMAS Jenny. 1983. Cross-Cultural Pragmatic Failure. *Applied Linguistics*, 4, 2: 91-112.
- 1988. *Discourse Roles and Role-Switching in Interaction*. Unpublished lecture hand-out. Lancaster University.
- 1995. *Meaning in Interaction: An Introduction to Pragmatics*. London: Longman.
- TING-TOOMEY Stella (ed.) 1994. *The Challenge of Facework. Cross-Cultural and Interpersonal Issues*. N.Y.: State University of New York Press.
- TING-TOOMEY Stella & COCROFT Beth-Ann. 1994. Face and Facework: Theoretical and Research Issues. In TING-TOOMEY S. (ed.): 307-340.
- TOMLINSON Barbara. 1990. Ong May Be Wrong: Negotiating with Nonfictional Readers. In KIRSCH G. & ROEN D. (ed.): 85-98.
- TOULMIN S.E. 1958. *The Uses of Argument*. Cambridge: C.U.P.
- TURNER Joan. 1993. E.A.P.: Peripheral Current or Mainstream Flow? In BLUE G.M.:122-131.
- ULLELAND Magnus. 1977. Osservazione sul passivo in italiano. In *Atti del secondo congresso degli italianisti scandinavi*: 95-145. Turku: Turun Yliopisto Offset.
- VANDE KOPPLE William J. 1985. Some Exploratory Discourse on Metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication*, 36, 1: 82:93.
- VENIER Federica. 1986. Gli avverbi modali. *Lingua e Stile*, 21, 4: 459-483.
- VENTOLA E. & MAURANEN Anna.(eds) 1996. *Academic Writing. Intercultural and textual issues*. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- VERSCHUEREN Jef, OSTMAN Jan-Ola & BLOMMAERT Jan (eds). 1995. *Handbook of Pragmatics. Manual*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin.
- VINCENT Nigel. 1988. Italian. In HARRIS M. & VINCENT N. (eds). *The Romance Languages*: 279-313. London: Routledge.
- WARDAUGH Ronald. 1970. The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis. *TESOL Quarterly*, 4: 123-130.
- WARNER Richard. 1985. *Discourse Connectives in English*. New York: Garland Publishing.
- WEIR Cyril. 1988. Academic Writing. Can we Please All the People All the Time? In ROBINSON P. (ed.): 17-34.
- WIDDOWSON Henry. 1984. *Explorations in Applied Linguistics 2*. Oxford: O.U.P.

- WILLARD Thomas & BROWN Stuart. 1990. The One and the Many: A Brief History of the Distinction. In KIRSCH G. & ROEN D. (eds.): 40-57.
- WILLIAMS Joseph. 1990. *Style. Toward Clarity and Grace*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- WILLEY R.J.. 1990. Pre-classical Roots of the Addressed / Invoked Dichotomy of Audience. In KIRSCH G. & ROEN D.(eds.): 25-39.
- WILSON Deirdre & SPERBER Dan. 1988. Mood and the analysis of non-declarative sentences. In DANCY J., MORAVCZIK J. & TAYLOR C. (eds.). *Human Agency: Language, Duty and Value*: 229-324. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- WINTER Eugene. 1977. A Clause relational approach to English texts: a study of some predictive lexical items in written discourse. *Instructional Science*, 6,1: 1-92.
- 1986. Clause Relations as Information Structure: Two Basic Text Structures in English. In COULTHARD M. (ed.): 88-108.
- VON WRIGHT E.H. 1951. *An Essay in Modal Logic*. Amsterdam: North Holland.
- ZELLERMAYER Michal. 1988. An Analysis of Oral and Literate Texts: Two Types of Reader-Writer Relationships in Hebrew and in English. In RAFOTH & RUBIN D. (eds.): 287-303.

APPENDIX 1

EXAMINATION TASKS

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 SECOND YEAR JUNE DEGREE EXAM 1991 - Paper 2

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

4a. 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.

4b. 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.' Debate.

4c. 'In all great poetry there is something which must remain unaccountable ... and that is what matters most.' (T.S. Eliot) Discuss.

ITALIAN LITERATURE 2ND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM JUNE 1990

UNIVERSITY OF UDINE (ITALY)

La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo?

APPENDIX 2

THE DATA

- Italian data: p. 416
- English data: p. 471

TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

The scripts have been transcribed as they were written by the students, without corrections of spelling, grammar or discourse structure.

~~strikethrough~~: student's correction

: clearly marked new paragraph

indent #: the student marked the paragraph with indent

#?: there might be a new paragraph, but the student has not marked it clearly

[] : lecturer's corrections

<> : my comments

<?>: illegible word

[], <> and ~~strikethrough~~ are not counted in the total number of words

\/ the lecturer means that something is missing

* * added as a footnote or additional text by the student

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I1 MARK:26/30 WORDS:1107
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TEACHER'S REMARKS: Esatta definizione storico-culturale
 del fenomeno scapigliato; linguaggio corretto

Il quadro dell'attività letteraria italiana, negli anni successivi al conseguimento dell'unità, pare delinearsi in una ricerca di contenuti ed espressioni nuove. Nell'ambito della letteratura narrativa, si avverte l'esigenza di rappresentare la realtà anche del mondo umile; proprio a questo indirizzo verrà dato il nome di 'Verismo'. Questa esigenza si era già avvertita nell'età del Romanticismo, quando Alessandro Manzoni affermava che l'opera dello scrittore doveva nascere non tanto dalla sua fantasia quanto dalla sua capacità di cogliere la verità nascosta dietro le vicende umane. Tuttavia questo insegnamento non era stato accolto da alcuni successori dello stesso Manzoni, come Cesare Cantù o Niccolò Tommaseo, i quali sottolineavano piuttosto lo scopo educativo dell'opera d'arte.

#? E' in questo quadro che, dopo il '60, si inserisce l'esperienza della scapigliatura, che ebbe il merito di proporre soluzioni nuove sia nei contenuti che nello stile, ma che fu incapace di assumere un atteggiamento globalmente realista. Il termine 'scapigliatura' fu usato da Cletto Arrighi come corrispondente della parola francese bohème. L'Arrighi intendeva così definire un gruppo di individui, soprattutto di Milano e Torino, animato da un atteggiamento di ribellione nei confronti della borghesia e di quella che Verga definì la 'società delle Banche e delle imprese industriali'. Questo atteggiamento di ribellione, che si tradusse in una vita sregolata e, molto spesso, conclusa tragicamente con il suicidio, aveva le sue radici nel quadro storico-sociale delineatosi in Italia negli anni successivi al conseguimento dell'unità. Presso l'intellettualità italiana si era infatti venuto a creare un senso diffuso di insoddisfazione, derivato dalla consapevolezza di un'unità non ancora completamente raggiunta, maturata in seguito a grosse sconfitte e, in ogni caso, grazie all'ausilio di armi straniere; e, nello stesso tempo, si avvertiva un vuoto di ideali perché pareva che, una volta concluso il Risorgimento, non ci fossero più obiettivi per cui lottare. Tuttavia, il fattore che aggrava questa situazione e che ebbe le sue ripercussioni a livello europeo, prima ancora che italiano, fu il nuovo indirizzo economicistico intrapreso da quella borghesia che, fino ad allora, aveva lottato in nome di grandi ideali.

#? E' evidente quindi come in una società in cui 'la civiltà è un benessere' in fondo al quale non c'è altro che il 'godimento materiale', la figura dell'intellettuale e dell'arte in generale, divenga una superfluità sociale e, come tale, scompaia nella totale indifferenza. E' questo il contesto storico-sociale su cui si sviluppò il movimento scapigliato.

#? Appendice romantica o protodecadentismo? La risposta non è facile, perché optare per una definizione o l'altra, significherebbe dare un giudizio troppo limitativo di questo movimento letterario che, sebbene sotto certi aspetti, preannunci il decadentismo, rimane ancora legato al romanticismo. Gli scapigliati infatti, nella loro produzione letteraria, si schierano con il sentimentalismo, il patriottismo romantico, ma sono incapaci di un distacco effettivo dai valori romantici. Presentano un dualismo inconciliabile: tra rappresentazioni realistiche che non escludono il macabro e l'orrido e la tendenza ad evadere verso il sogno. Natalino Sapegno parla di 'una esigenza di novità', piuttosto che di una effettiva proposta di elementi innovativi, dietro al loro atteggiamento non ci sarebbe altro che il vuoto. Asor Rosa parla di 'una mancanza di coraggio intellettuale' che impedirebbe a questi scrittori di distaccarsi dal romanticismo. Si possono prendere in considerazione, a dimostrazione di questa convivenza di vecchio e nuovo, alcune poesie di Emilio Praga. Preludio e Manzoni hanno entrambe, come punto di riferimento, la figura di Alessandro Manzoni, ma l'atteggiamento del poeta nei confronti dello scrittore è decisamente diverso. Nella poesia Preludio c'è un atteggiamento di polemica nei confronti di questo 'casto poeta', per lui non c'è posto, 'degli antecristi è l'ora'. La poesia Manzoni, invece, rappresenta un rovesciamento di questa posizione polemica, è quasi una preghiera affinché il 'casto poeta' ispiri la loro poesia, la illumini. E Manzoni fu certamente uno dei bersagli della protesta degli scapigliati perché rappresentava proprio quell'integrità morale, quel patriottismo, quella fede religiosa, contro cui essi si schierarono.

Si possono poi citare le poesie di critica nei confronti della religione e di tutti i suoi riti e quelle in cui invece il poeta pensa lietamente alla propria infanzia educata religiosamente. Nella poesia Un frate il Praga si sofferma sulla figura di questo uomo, nella cui descrizione si compendia tutto l'odio del poeta. Non diverso è il suo atteggiamento nella poesia Seraphina, dove questa prostituta frequentatissima dai giovani, viene celebrata come insegnante di teologia.

Ma ci sono anche le poesie nostalgico-idilliche, dove il poeta desidera ritornare all'infanzia, quando si sentiva un giovane re senza scettro e quando, la notte dell'epifania, udiva i Re Magi avvicinarsi alla sua porta, quando si sentiva estasiato nel sentire l'odore di incenso che usciva dalla chiesa. Nello stesso tempo però, il poeta avverte anche l'impossibilità di un recupero affettivo dell'infanzia perché il presente è contrassegnato dall'ateismo, tra il presente ed il passato si è interposto un muro a guardia del quale c'è il dubbio.

Le poesie del cosiddetto 'versante maledettistico' del Praga, sono poesie di protesta, di ribellione, in cui la

107 realtà è descritta in termini crudi e realistici; quelle
 108 dell'infanzia ci presentano un poeta romantico,
 109 nostalgico-idillico, sembrava quasi sfociare nella
 110 dimensione fiabesca. Alcuni elementi di decadentismo,
 111 sempre nella produzione di Praga, sono evidenti nel
 112 romanzo Memorie del Presbiterio, che presenta una
 113 struttura volutamente disorganica, che procede per storie
 114 sovrapposte. Uno svolgimento che ricorda esempi come
 115 *Sterne* e che rappresenta una novità in area italiana.
 116 # Il romanzo di Tarchetti, Una nobile follia, è
 117 improntato su una convivenza fra Romanticismo e
 118 Decadentismo, c'è una proposta di valori romantici che
 119 vengono affermati per essere poi smentiti dalla
 120 successione degli avvenimenti. Il Tarchetti si serve del
 121 protagonista per condannare la guerra, la subordinazione
 122 del soldato ai superiori, la borghesia che guarda
 123 estasiata le parate militari, le monarchie. Egli propone
 124 valori romantici quale l'amore, l'arte, la religione, ma
 125 si tratta di buoni propositi che rimarranno irrealizzati:
 126 Vincenzo D., dopo aver disertato proprio per propagare
 127 fra gli uomini questi valori apprende la notizia della
 128 morte della fidanzata, è continuamente tormentato dal
 129 rimorso per avere ucciso un polacco. Tutto questo lo
 130 sconvolge, subentra in lui il dubbio che corrode tutti i
 131 suoi ideali, comincia a chiudersi sempre di più in sé
 132 stesso, fino ad arrivare alla follia. Vincenzo D. da eroe
 133 romantico si trasforma in un eroe decadente chiuso in sé
 134 stesso. Questo tema dell'isolamento dell'individuo in un
 135 proprio mondo interiore è senz'altro un motivo decadente.
 136 Vincenzo D. in preda alla follia si sente diviso,
 137 dissociato e questo tema sarà carico di sviluppi futuri
 138 (Musil, Proust).
 139 #? Concludendo, mi pare non si possa parlare di
 140 scapigliatura come romanticismo oppure come proto-
 141 decadentismo, come sostiene W. Binni, perché la
 142 scapigliatura si spiega proprio in questa convivenza fra
 143 'vecchio' e 'nuovo'.

ITALIAN SCRIPT:I2 MARK:20 WORDS:1010
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 LECTURER'S COMMENTS: Lo svolgimento risponde a un grado
 d'informazione più che discreto. Ma la sintassi è spesso
 approssimativa, 'slegata' (in molti casi basterebbe, a
 correggerla, un miglior uso della punteggiatura).
 Inoltre: non si discute abbastanza il rapporto fra
 Scapigliatura e romanticismo.

1 # La Scapigliatura nasce come movimento di opposizione
 2 nei confronti della società ottocentesca che appunto in
 3 questi anni sta subendo delle trasformazioni che
 4 riguardano non soltanto l'ambito politico e sociale ma
 5 hanno un riflesso anche sulla sfera culturale. Le antiche
 6 vanità illusorie [illusioni risorgimentali] che avevano
 7 animato e infervorato lo spirito di molti patrioti
 8 trovando anche l'appoggio di diversi strati della

popolazione, in questo momento vacillano perché assistono
 [si assiste] al fallimento delle istanze politiche
 economiche e sociali [istanze-cardini] cardini indiscussi
 della struttura sociale precedente. L'Italia stava
 attraversando un periodo di profonda crisi; malgrado il
 raggiungimento dell'Unità conseguita però in modo
 parziale numerosi erano i problemi che il nuovo Stato
 costituito si trovava ad affrontare per arrivare a
 definirsi come organo moderno e compatto. Prima fra tutti
 era la questione di unificare le varie popolazioni non
 solo geograficamente ma anche spiritualmente, tutto ciò
 ebbe una notevole ripercussione nella sfera intellettuale
 del tempo provocando una frattura all'interno di essa e
 favorendo la formazione di atteggiamenti contrastanti e
 distinti. Aleggava un senso di disagio collettivo reso
 più acuto dalla presa di coscienza dei diversi aspetti
 della nuova realtà: inferiorità militare dell'Italia che
 in guerra otteneva l'appoggio delle altre potenze e [?],
 anche la politica colonialistica non garantiva risultati
 sicuri. Assistiamo dunque a grandi cambiamenti
 caratterizzati dalla nascita di una nuova mentalità
 utilitaristica che si stava diffondendo proprio
 all'interno di quella borghesia istituitasi
 nell'Ottocento. C'è la sostituzione di vecchi ideali con
 altri di carattere pratico-utilitaristico e tutto questo
 comporta un allontanamento dell'artista dalla società;
 gli Scapigliati [-] circolo di artisti e scrittori
 formatosi soprattutto nel Nord, Lombardia e Piemonte,
 dove stava prendendo piede l'industrialismo e dove si
 assisteva allo sviluppo e alla nascita di nuove città [-]
 non accettavano questa evoluzione ritenuta responsabile
 della perdita e della degradazione delle vecchie
 ideologie risorgimentali esaltate e animate dal poeta che
 aveva avuto a quel tempo una funzione pratico-pubblica e
 un ruolo importante sia nel settore politico che sociale.
 Il rifiuto e il ripudio della modernità e quindi della
 nuova realtà ha come immediata conseguenza
 l'estraneazione dello scrittore e il rinchiudersi in se
 stesso trovando conforto nel solo appagamento delle
 esigenze stilistiche e formali, un modo quindi di
 descrivere dall'esterno, senza aderirvi. Un esempio è
 fornito da Emilio Praga nella poesia All'Amico di stampo
 programmatico [:] è come uno sfogo interno non si rivolge
 al pubblico, l'apprezzamento del quale significherebbe
 scarso valore artistico, ma esclusivamente all'amico
 Arrigo Boito unico in grado di valutare e apprezzare le
 qualità della sua poesia e di comprendere e di
 condividere le sue aspirazioni artistiche. Negli
 Scapigliati è presente il dualismo, non c'è solo il
 versante polemico-contestatorio ma anche quello
 nostalgico idillico; nella Strada Ferrata inizialmente
 c'è il vagheggiamento dei beni preziosi ormai perduti, la
 distruzione del patrimonio naturale e artistico, e le
 continue domande: dove sono le grandi contrade ove un
 tempo giocavano i bambini, e gli alti faggi? C'è
 l'intenzione del Praga di calarsi nella psicologia dei

65 contadini per far sue quelle che sono le loro sofferenze
 66 per poi ergersi a pedagogo e per consolarli e informarli
 67 sui vantaggi derivanti dalla costruzione della ferrovia
 68 che alleggerirà il lavoro umano. Se all'inizio però [il
 69 poeta] è intenzionato a farsi interprete e salvaguardare
 70 gli interessi dei contadini [,] alla fine c'è il recupero
 71 delle proprie concezioni iniziali. Questi ~~poeti~~-[autori
 72 (poeti e prosatori)] forse per impeto o desiderio di
 73 verità cercano di trasferire nella poesia ogni tipo di
 74 realtà e se la generazione precedente promuoveva e
 75 celebrava valori positivi e spirituali, gli Scapigliati
 76 tendono a far emergere quello che di negativo e nefasto
 77 sussiste nella natura umana e che talvolta l'uomo rifiuta
 78 di accettare, ecco che allora sia in versi che in prosa
 79 la narrazione acquista un tono macabro con immagini e
 80 descrizioni lugubri. Le tematiche scapigliate possono in
 81 un certo qual modo preannunciare il decadentismo, siamo
 82 proprio in una fase decadente in cui l'artista non si
 83 sente partecipe e si isola dagli altri cercando rifugio
 84 nella poesia, perché non si sente integrato nella nuova
 85 realtà trasformata. Queste problematiche vengono
 86 affrontate anche in Francia da Baudelaire che assiste
 87 alla scomparsa della vecchia Parigi e che constata il
 88 dissidio ormai esistente tra scrittore e società come
 89 conseguenza della crescita e dei cambiamenti apportati
 90 dalla nuova città. Da ciò la predilezione del tema
 91 dell'individualismo. Possiamo avvicinare la poetica
 92 scapigliata a quella del Pascoli per l'importanza data al
 93 recupero dell'infanzia, il rivivere quel periodo della
 94 vita passata, quindi recupero del passato. In Praga si
 95 avverte questo intento di riportare alla memoria periodi
 96 ormai trascorsi della fanciullezza. Nei Re Magi questi
 97 ricordi sono legati a quelli dei riti cristiani e al loro
 98 svolgimento, quando il bambino lasciava fuori dalla porta
 99 una ciotola che sua madre riempiva di regali e quando
 100 aspettava l'arrivo dei Re Magi che bussassero alla porta.
 101 L'infanzia revocata come periodo gioioso e sereno ha come
 102 fondamento l'educazione cristiana, quindi è <lecturer
 103 underlined è> un desiderio di ripristinare gli antichi
 104 affetti e le abitudini tradizionali familiari. Però nella
 105 poesia alla Madre egli cerca di raccontare la sua storia
 106 ma la sua mente è annebbiata, la nebbia è un nemico che
 107 gli impedisce di ricordare. Ora lui è nella fase
 108 dell'ateismo che è quella dell'età adulta che contrappone
 109 a quella religiosa dell'età infantile. Nelle Memorie del
 110 Presbiterio di carattere autobiografico, rappresenta il
 111 suo periodo di vita vissuto in Francia e poi nel novarese
 112 dove lui come pittore si intrattiene in piacevoli
 113 conversazioni culturali con il parroco che lo ospita e lo
 114 descrive buono, mite, patriota valori che lui di solito
 115 non trovava nelle persone di chiesa. Quindi negli
 116 Scapigliati c'è il bisogno qualche volta di un approdo
 117 religioso, di una credenza che procuri certezze, nella
 118 loro mente dominata dal dubbio. L'atteggiamento nei
 119 confronti di Manzoni è duplice contrastante [:] da una
 120 parte lo rifiutano per la sua poetica e per la sua

121 concezione della vita, dall'altra lo rispettano [...] anche
 122 [Anche] il Praga in una poesia dopo la sua morte lo
 123 ritiene il tutore della poesia. Si può dire perciò che
 124 benché esulano [esulino, col congiuntivo] gli Scapigliati
 125 dagli schemi ~~normali~~ -tradizionali della poesia tuttavia
 126 è presente in loro una voglia di ritornare al passato e
 127 alle tradizioni e al ripiegarsi in esse.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I3 MARK: 25 WORDS: 1292
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: Convincente puntualizzazione della
 collocazione storico-culturale del movimento.

1 # L'esaurirsi del movimento romantico fu segnato non
 2 soltanto da cambiamenti di tipo ideologico, ma anche da
 3 nuove spinte sul piano sociale e politico.
 4 # E' infatti rilevante sottolineare <the lecturer
 5 underlined the previous words> un movimento storico
 6 decisivo per la situazione europea quale la rivoluzione
 7 di luglio in Francia nel 1848: come, infatti, ha
 8 sottolineato Luckács nel suo Narrare o Descrivere?, e in
 9 accordo con lui molti altri come Houser and Auerbach,
 10 questa data è fondamentale anche per il mondo culturale,
 11 per la letteratura e soprattutto per la lingua del poeta,
 12 poiché il raggiungimento di una stabilità politica da
 13 parte della borghesia ormai arroccata sui suoi privilegi
 14 economici e l'incipiente progresso di una mentalità
 15 materialistica misero in crisi il ruolo sociale del
 16 poeta. Il primo a dar segno di tale crisi fu Baudelaire,
 17 che nella sua Perdita dell'aureola <the lecturer
 18 underlined dell'> rende nota la consapevolezza d'aver
 19 perso, in veste di poeta, ogni funzione civile: l'aureola
 20 vuole simboleggiare proprio il ruolo pedagogico e
 21 didattico del letterato che, avendola smarrita nel fango,
 22 non si dà la pena di raccogliercela poiché ormai la società
 23 non ha bisogno della sua poesia. Infatti il pubblico è
 24 notevolmente cambiato, si è allargato, e a risentire di
 25 questo ampliamento è proprio la qualità delle opere: il
 26 lettore borghese non chiede una lettura problematica,
 27 bensì chiede alla letteratura svago e distrazione dai
 28 suoi problemi quotidiani, quindi opere piuttosto
 29 superficiali.
 30 #? E' dunque finita la 'missione civile' del poeta che
 31 non ha più un pubblico da spronare alla lotta <the
 32 lecturer underlined the last 4 words> in nome di ideali
 33 profondi. Da questo momento nel mondo culturale europeo
 34 si osserva una duplice tendenza: da una parte la
 35 predilezione per il soggetto e l'introspezione, per il
 36 mondo del magico, dell'occulto e del sogno, la ricerca di
 37 modi eccentrici e stravaganti soprattutto nei temi e nel
 38 linguaggio, tendenza questa che si evolverà nel
 39 Decadentismo. Dall'altra parte, invece, l'orientamento
 40 verso l'oggetto, il concreto, attraverso una prosa chiara
 41 e scorrevole che si propone una rappresentazione
 42 oggettiva del reale con rigore quasi scientifico,

atteggiamento tipico del realismo <the lecturer underlined realismo>.

E questi riferimenti alla situazione europea sono rilevanti anche per l'analisi di quella italiana, anche se problematiche di questo tipo in Italia emergono tardi, dopo l'unificazione del 1861. Infatti è proprio nel clima post-unitario di insoddisfazione e 'vuoto ideale' che matura la ribellione scapigliata in una Milano, e più in generale in una Lombardia, che risente negativamente dell'unificazione e comincia a conoscere i problemi dello sviluppo economico e delle tensioni sociali.

Gli scapigliati, come dice l'Arrighi ne La Scapigliatura e il 6 febbraio. Un Dramma di famiglia, sono gli spostati, gli anticonformisti, gli sbandati che in opposizione al gusto borghese sentono il bisogno di originalità e per questo mirano a sbarazzarsi di tutta la tradizione per aprire le porte agli influssi d'oltralpe. Difatti per colmare questa loro sete di novità gli scapigliati si lasciano influenzare dai poeti francesi e tedeschi: i primi offrono come esempio la volontà di ribaltare la morale e la socialità tradizionali, gli altri affascinano per la loro ricerca di solitudine e isolamento.

A questo punto è lecito chiedersi se la scapigliatura non sia altro che un prolungamento, una fase ulteriore del Romanticismo, o se piuttosto non sia un movimento che prepara la strada ai poeti decadenti. Ormai la prima ipotesi, nonostante molti l'abbiano sostenuta, è stata superata e si riconosce che gli scapigliati si spingono oltre il Romanticismo con una poetica indipendente e distinta, ma è pur sempre vero che certi autori, soprattutto gli anticipatori di questa tendenza lombarda, risentono ancora degli influssi romantici.

L'esempio più caratteristico è quello del Tarchetti che, essendo un pioniere della Scapigliatura, resta in parte legato al passato. Ne è conferma la ripresa del binomio amore/morte, topos romantico che egli rivisita spingendosi quasi al parossismo, come dimostra Fosca, romanzo che egli scrisse in base ad un'esperienza personale del rapporto amoroso con una donna dalla bruttezza impressionante, ossessionata, come del resto il Tarchetti, dall'idea della morte e che con la sua morbosa passionalità finirà per assorbire le energie vitali del protagonista. O ancora Memento, una poesia in cui l'autore è continuamente assillato dall'immagine della morte, tanto da avvertirla anche nell'abbraccio dell'amata che sotto le sue sembianze nasconde uno scheletro bianco e freddo. E quest'immagine della morte viene esasperata fino a giungere alla necrofilia in Bouvard in cui l'autore lascia immaginare l'amplesso con una donna morta. Ma non si può certo trascurare il Tarchetti di Una nobile follia, profondamente antimilitarista e impegnato nella volontà di demistificazione di una società che si serve dell'educazione per sconvolgere i veri valori e trasformarli in strumenti di potere.

Il protagonista Vincenzo D. finirà per rifiutare la società e cercare la solitudine: egli non riesce più a sopportare la presenza degli altri uomini poiché l'esperienza della guerra ha scosso la sua fede nella bontà umana. Ma la sua coraggiosa protesta si spegne nella solitudine e nel suicidio, così il titano romantico si trasforma in eroe decadente.

Questo è ciò che verrà trasmesso al Decadentismo: il senso di insicurezza, di scissione interiore, di smarrimento e sbandamento che spinse gli scapigliati ad una vita fatta di isolamento, di contemplazione della morte e della vanità della vita, rifiutati da una società capace di offrire solo valori triti e gretto moralismo.

L'isolamento è dunque una caratteristica peculiare del poeta scapigliato che si accorge di non poter essere capito da nessuno, se non dai suoi amici poeti che vivono il suo stesso turbamento. Asor Rosa ci fa notare che la poesia scapigliata è proprio una poesia per pochi e fatta soprattutto di insicurezza ideologica, una poesia che si muove tra la contestazione irriverente del passato e il recupero di quella stessa tradizione, che sembra l'unica soluzione di salvezza poiché al 'vecchio' gli scapigliati non sanno contrapporre un 'nuovo' valido e stabile. A sottolineare questa loro insicurezza ci sono poesie come Dualismo del Boito, che descrive un uomo interiormente scisso e in bilico tra tendenze opposte, oppure I Re Magi, Preludio e Manzoni del Praga, che denotano il suo blasfemo rifiuto del passato ma nello stesso tempo la nostalgia della serenità ormai perduta che le salde tradizioni culturali e religiose avevano dato alla sua infanzia.

Sul piano formale gli scapigliati sono protesi alla ricerca del nuovo, del bizzarro, e anche in questo senso offrono uno spunto al Decadentismo che avrà, appunto, un acuto senso dell'individuale e sentirà l'esigenza di creazioni nuove e suggestive.

Infatti l'importanza di poeti come Boito o Dossi sta anche nelle loro innovazioni a livello di stile e di linguaggio. Arrigo Boito oltre che poeta fu musicista e questo gli permise di raggiungere una suggestiva musicalità nei suoi versi: ma soprattutto in Re Orso spicca la sua volontà di ricerca del bizzarro, dell'estroso, poiché qui egli si propone di demistificare tutta la tradizione letteraria offrendo un'incredibile 'contaminatio' svuotata di ogni implicazione ideologica. Lo stesso vale per Dossi che fece dell'originalità il suo obiettivo principale.

Altri critici hanno voluto vedere nella Scapigliatura una proiezione verso il futuro non solo in direzione del Decadentismo, ma anche in direzione del Realismo: infatti gli scapigliati sono orientati verso la descrizione del reale, ma di un reale cupo e angosciante, si compiacciono della rappresentazione del brutto, proprio di quell'aspetto che non era stato ritenuto degno di menzione nella letteratura precedente. Questo è naturalmente un considerevole contributo al realismo

155 degli anni a venire, anche se una fondamentale differenza
 156 resta il fatto che gli scapigliati descrivono un reale
 157 interiorizzato, un mondo contaminato dalle loro
 158 sensazioni personali. Insomma, il grande merito degli
 159 scapigliati, è stato quello d'aver capito che per dare
 160 inizio a nuove tendenze era necessario sgombrare il
 161 terreno di tutto il 'vecchio': il loro limite fu però
 162 l'incapacità di contrapporre alla tradizione un 'nuovo'
 163 altrettanto concreto.
 164 # Una ribellione, la loro, chiusa in sé stessa, anche se
 165 disperatamente coerente a livello personale.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I4 MARK: 20 WORDS: 779
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: Abbastanza informato

1 # L'insuccesso delle rivoluzioni europee del 1830 e del
 2 1848, l'esasperazione delle tendenze irrazionalistiche
 3 romantiche, lo sviluppo della scienza e della tecnica, il
 4 liberalismo borghese contribuivano, nella seconda metà
 5 dell'Ottocento, a rendere manifesta la relatività di quei
 6 valori esaltati come assoluti dal Romanticismo.
 7 # In modo particolare in Italia, all'indomani dell'Unità
 8 (1861) persisteva una situazione di irredentismo, e circa
 9 un decennio più tardi <5 previous words underlined by the
 10 lecturer> la delusione provocata dalla politica
 11 colonialistica causava una generale sfiducia di tutti.
 12 # Inoltre ci si doveva confrontare con gravi problemi
 13 sociali, quali il brigantaggio nel Meridione e l'elevata
 14 percentuale di analfabetismo.
 15 # In questa situazione di caduta di ideali, in cui
 16 l'intellettuale aveva ormai perduto la sua funzione
 17 pedagogica, nasceva, convenzionalmente il 6 febbraio
 18 1862, la Scapigliatura, sia come movimento letterario,
 19 sia come fatto di costume anticonformista.
 20 # Si trattava di una corrente prevalentemente lombarda,
 21 con succhi dialettali locali, ma che fondava la propria
 22 ispirazione sui bohémien francesi. E entrambi
 23 conducevano vita irregolare e zingaresca, dedita alle
 24 'pratiche maledette' della droga e dell'alcool, in
 25 reazione al materialismo del reale <4 words underlined> e
 26 al simulato perbenismo borghese.
 27 # La tematica moderna che la Scapigliatura affrontava
 28 principalmente era il cosiddetto dualismo, cioè la
 29 condizione per cui l'io è bipartito, è continuamente teso
 30 verso la nostalgia e la polemica, verso l'angelico e il
 31 satanico, il ripudio della tradizione ed il languore
 32 nostalgico nei confronti di ciò che è stato; questo è
 33 quanto affermava il Boito nella poesia Dualismo, che fu
 34 fra i manifesti del movimento scapigliato.
 35 # La tematica del dualismo sarebbe sfociata più tardi in
 36 quella del doppio, e sarebbe stata esasperata dal
 37 Decadentismo. Era, comunque, una tematica che apparteneva
 38 al tardo Romanticismo, quello irrazionalista, che vedeva

nel conflitto fra ideale e reale una condizione di vita pressoché impossibile per l'uomo.

L'intellettuale secondottocentesco si rendeva conto di non poter più proporre un'arte altamente ispirata, che cantasse nobili sentimenti, che avesse una funzione pedagogica. Il lettore era il borghese, il quale cercava nella letteratura un semplice conforto, uno svago, voleva un'arte consolatoria, affatto <underlined by the lecturer> impegnata.

Inoltre, si era notevolmente sviluppata l'industria editoriale, che puntava al guadagno e quindi non pubblicava opere che poi non sarebbero state lette.

L'artista si stava rendendo conto di essere solo e si trovava davanti a un bivio: o scegliere di fare una letteratura apologetica della borghesia, o scrivere per se stesso e per pochi eletti.

La Scapigliatura si inserisce in questo secondo filone, in polemica con la cruda realtà e con la borghesia capitalistica.

L'intellettuale europeo secondottocentesco avvertiva un profondo disorientamento causato dal crollo degli ideali a contatto con la realtà, e di conseguenza sentiva il bisogno di andare a cercare altrove un io che rispondesse alle proprie esigenze. Alcuni sceglievano la strada dell'autotrascendenza ascendente, <underlined by the lecturer from 'di andare'> cioè il contatto con Dio, con un'entità sovranaturale. Altri optavano per la rivoluzione, ma ottenendo scarsi risultati, perché era un circolo vizioso che portava al punto di partenza. Altri ancora, fra cui i bohemiennes e gli scapigliati, sceglievano l'autotrascendenza discendente, cioè il contatto con l'inconscio attraverso l'alcool, la droga, l'eroticismo esasperato, fino a giungere al suicidio.

Questa tendenza era tipicamente pre-decadente e sarebbe stata poi studiata da Freud, nell'analisi dell'es, inconscio e del super io, coscienza morale; tendenza che in letteratura veniva definita come doppio. <the lecturer underlined from 'tendenza'>

Iginio Ugo Tarchetti ne fu il portavoce nelle sue opere, in modo particolare in Una nobile follia, dove convergevano i temi scapigliati della polemica nei confronti della borghesia e del Positivismo, e dell'anti-militarismo, ma anche temi che preannunciavano il Decadentismo, come il rifugiarsi dell'individuo in un mondo dove non esistono contraddizioni, dove \ / può realizzarsi [realizzare] le proprie aspirazioni. Infatti, in questo romanzo del Tarchetti, il protagonista finge il suicidio <the lecturer underlined the last 3 words> per andare alla ricerca di una vita migliore; ma si rivelerà un anti-eroe decadente, perché le sue illusioni saranno vane e sarà destinato alla sconfitta.

Si può notare, quindi, certi toni <the lecturer underlined the lack of agreement> che saranno tipici di Pirandello; infatti Filippo Sponta di Una nobile follia è come Mattia Pascal <last 3 words underlined by the lecturer> dell'omonimo romanzo pirandelliano. Da un lato,

95 quindi, la scapigliatura continuava certi temi tardo-
 96 romantici, portandoli anche alle estreme conseguenze;
 97 dall'altro, anticipava però quelle che sarebbero state
 98 alcune fra le caratteristiche del Decadentismo.
 99 #? C'erano naturalmente temi comuni ad entrambe le
 100 correnti letterarie, perché la realtà contingente era
 101 simile; il progresso e la tecnologia deterioravano sempre
 102 di più il volto antico delle città; inoltre, la paura del
 103 nuovo, l'opportunismo e il materialismo portavano a
 104 chiudersi in sé stessi e ad evitare il contatto con la
 105 realtà.
 106 # La Scapigliatura si inserisce, quindi, in un periodo di
 107 transizione e, come tale, difficile; ecco perché come
 108 alcuni critici le hanno contestato, non ha portato nulla
 109 di nuovo in campo formale, al di là delle tematiche
 110 moderne.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I5 MARK: 23 WORDS: 627
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 LECTURER'S COMMENTS: Svolgimento breve ma informato e
 puntuale

1 # La Scapigliatura è un movimento letterario che si
 2 afferma, dopo l'unità nazionale, nei maggiori centri
 3 <last 3 words underlined by the lecturer> dell'Italia
 4 settentrionale. Milano, Torino, Genova e altre città del
 5 nord sono i principali epicentri scapigliati. Il motivo
 6 in base al quale i più importanti gruppi scapigliati si
 7 dislocano nel nord della nostra nazione è che questa area
 8 era la più avanzata economicamente, ed inoltre era più
 9 vicina agli influssi stranieri.
 10 # L'atto ufficiale di nascita della Scapigliatura viene
 11 considerato la pubblicazione, nel 1862, del romanzo di
 12 Cletto Arrighi intitolato La Scapigliatura e il 6
 13 febbraio. In questa opera l'Arrighi delinea le
 14 caratteristiche principali di questo movimento. E' un
 15 gruppo di persone di ambo i sessi; ha fra i venti e i
 16 trentacinque anni; pronti al bene, quanto al male;
 17 turbolenti; irrequieti e di ogni condizione sociale.
 18 # Il termine scapigliatura deriva dalla traduzione della
 19 parola francese 'bohème' che l'Arrighi ha rinvenuto
 20 nell'opera di Balzac. Con l'espressione 'bohémien' Balzac
 21 designava un giovane artista francese che conduceva una
 22 vita povera e disordinata, ma libera e anticonformista.
 23 Gli scapigliati italiani, infatti, si ponevano contro la
 24 cultura e la società dominante, conducendo una vita
 25 disordinata e dissoluta.
 26 # I più importanti esponenti di questo movimento sono:
 27 Emilio Praga, Iginio Ugo Tarchetti, Arrigo e Camillo
 28 Boito, Carlo Dossi, Luigi Gualdo, Roberto Sacchetti,
 29 Giovanni Camerana e Remigio Zena. Costoro non
 30 appartenevano tutti alla scapigliatura lombarda, perché
 31 <'perché' underlined by the lecturer> il Camerana ed il
 32 Sacchetti erano i principali rappresentanti della
 33 Scapigliatura piemontese, mentre il Zena era il più

importante portavoce della scapigliatura genovese. E' importante sottolineare questa distinzione, poiché il gruppo lombardo era quello più attivo e ribelle, a causa di un minor provincialismo e moralismo della sua regione. <the lecturer underlined the last 3 words> {? Nel mettere a confronto questa corrente letteraria con la letteratura precedente, ma anche con quella eupoea contemporanea, bisogna affermare <'affermare' underlined by the lecturer> che la Scapigliatura si colloca in una via di mezzo tra il Romanticismo e il Decadentismo. Se il Romanticismo ha riproposto l'importanza fondamentale della libertà dell'individuo, della tradizione e del genio dei singoli popoli, dell'aspirazione soggettiva alla religiosità e del carattere istintivo e fantastico della creazione artistica e letteraria, il Decadentismo, invece, non ha fatto altro che approfondire le tematiche riguardanti la vita interiore e l'esplorazione del subcosciente.

La Scapigliatura, poiché si afferma dopo il Romanticismo, ne riprende alcune caratteristiche principali. Si pensi soprattutto al valore dato dagli scapigliati a ~~valeri~~ concetti romantici quali: l'amore, l'amicizia, l'arte, la religione e al conflitto ideale-reale.

Ma la Scapigliatura deve essere considerata anche il primo ambiente di carattere decadente, e questo perché in essa si ritrovano valori tipicamente decadenti quali: il macabro, la malattia, la decadenza fisica.

Affermare, quindi, che questa corrente sia assolutamente o un'appendice romantica, o pre-decadentismo è erroneo. Essa è condizionata, infatti, tanto dai miti residui del romanticismo, quanto dalle prime tematiche decadenti.

La Scapigliatura, in realtà, è uno spirito diviso. E' un essere caratterizzato da una doppia indole nuova. (A questo proposito Arrigo Boito parlava di 'dualismo'). Nella sua opera, quindi, alterna tematiche spesso opposte e contrastanti. Delle volte <the lecturer underlined the last two words> si ancora a valori tipicamente borghese quali: <the lecturer underlined :> la montagna, la famiglia, la religione, e altre volte si scaglia contro questi stessi ideali e contro la cultura e la società che li professa. Di conseguenza se lo scapigliato è un essere diviso, anche la sua arte è tale. Egli ~~alterna~~ avvicenda un'arte celeste ed eletta, ad un'arte reprobata. Per questo, è più facile definire la Scapigliatura 'in negativo', cioè è più semplice puntualizzare ciò che non rappresenta, piuttosto che individuare i suoi contenuti, il suo programma.

Ritengo perciò, che attribuire alla Scapigliatura, o la definizione di appendice romantica, o \ / di pre-decadentismo sia troppo limitativo. Entrambe le denominazioni si addicono a designare questo movimento, che sicuramente ha contribuito a rinnovare e a migliorare la cultura e la società italiana.

ITALIAN SCRIPT I6 MARK: 25 WORDS: 946
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo?
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: Breve, ma sufficientemente corretto e puntuale

1 # 'Son luce ed ombra; angelica farfalle o bruco
 2 immondo...', così comincia la celebre poesia
 3 programmatica del movimento scapigliato Dualismo di A.
 4 Boito. Questi brevi versi rispecchiano l'essenza
 5 dell'anima scapigliata: un'anima divisa tra il bene e il
 6 male, il passato e il presente, il Romanticismo e il
 7 Decadentismo, oserei dire. E' una generazione che
 8 riflette un determinato periodo storico: quello
 9 dell'Italia post-unitaria, un'Italia che si avvia
 10 all'industrializzazione. Come disse Cavour <lecturer
 11 underlined Cavour> 'L'Italia è fatta ora bisogna fare gli
 12 italiani'; così tutte le energie del popolo italiano si
 13 riversano nel settore dell'industria, del commercio,
 14 dell'edilizia, laddove dieci anni prima lo stesso popolo
 15 combatteva in nome degli ideali di patria, libertà,
 16 uguaglianza: gli ideali risorgimentali. Sono stati gli
 17 scrittori del primo ottocento quali Manzoni e Foscolo,
 18 per citarne i più grandi, i portabandiera, i diffusori di
 19 tali ideali. Il Romanticismo italiano è proprio
 20 caratterizzato da questa funzione pratico-pubblica del
 21 letterato, che combatte anche lui, usando la penna come
 22 arma, per l'unità d'Italia. A Risorgimento concluso, dopo
 23 il 1860 circa, quali sono i nuovi ideali da proporre, da
 24 difendere? Non ci sono; il nuovo 'credo' del popolo
 25 italiano è lo sviluppo economico. Si crea così una
 26 situazione di vuoto di valori e di economicismo
 27 dilagante; conseguentemente si registra una caduta della
 28 funzione del letterato all'interno della società; inizia
 29 un processo di emarginazione dell'artista. Egli è per
 30 primo consapevole di ciò, avverte un profondo senso di
 31 disagio, e perciò respinge l'assetto sociale in cui vive,
 32 lo critica, lo disprezza, assume atteggiamenti
 33 volutamente provocatori; trasgressione, isolamento,
 34 rifiuto del passato e del presente sono tutti tipici del
 35 nuovo artista: l'artista scapigliato che si rifà ai
 36 'bohémiens' francesi.
 37 # Il movimento scapigliato appare perciò come un
 38 movimento di protesta anti-borghese ma che non ha niente
 39 di nuovo, di realmente originale da proporre. Non solo:
 40 in realtà non riesce neppure a rompere definitivamente
 41 col passato, vi è infatti un rapporto 'odio et amo' con
 42 esso.
 43 # In un poeta come E. Praga, troviamo poesie che
 44 rinnegano completamente la letteratura del primo
 45 ottocento; si giunge ad esempio ad aggredire il Manzoni,
 46 che ne è l'emblema, con una frase come 'tu puoi morire
 47 ...' (da Preludio); ma ne troviamo altre che la ricordano
 48 con nostalgia, con rispetto, con rimpianto, come per
 49 l'appunto una poesia intitolata Manzoni scritta da Praga

per commemorare la morte di quello che è qui considerato un maestro.

In poesie come I Re Magi e Nox c'è il recupero della religiosità associato al recupero della felice infanzia; ed è noto che la religione è uno dei topos <lecturer underlined topos> del Romanticismo. Nella prima parte di esse Praga si abbandona alla nostalgia dei ricordi, si lascia andare a dei veri e propri romanticismi <lecturer underlined romanticismi> che rasentano l'eccesso: i Re Magi vengono descritti come 'I bei vegliardi bianchi dallo scettro d'oro', si ricorda il tempo in cui Praga fanciullo aveva una solida fede. Se si considera questo versante della poesia scapigliata, prendendone come esempio il più grande poeta, essa è molto vicina al romanticismo; ma ecco che nella seconda parte della stessa poesia c'è l'amara constatazione che il passato è passato, irrompe il presente dove non c'è più posto per la religione, non c'è più la fede, c'è solo il dubbio. Il dubbio è il leit-motiv degli scapigliati, è descritto come una possibilità da cui è impossibile liberarsi, // corrode la loro, <lecturer underlined loro> ed è anche segno di modernità: questa sensazione di smarrimento, di vuoto, di contraddittorietà, la ritroveremo anche nei poeti decadenti.

Non si può negare, che nelle poesie del Praga, e soprattutto nella prosa del Tarchetti, non si trovino, a volte, delle immagini e delle tematiche che ci ricordino il Pascoli o il D'Annunzio; in questo senso si parla del movimento scapigliato come di un movimento pre-decadentista <ista underlined by lecturer>.

Quali sono queste immagini, queste tematiche?

Direi che, per quanto riguarda la poesia del Praga, troviamo più che altro delle figure retoriche di sapore decadentista <ista underlined by lecturer>, per es. l'immagine della nebbia che simboleggia il dubbio che <che crossed out by lecturer> sarà cara anche a Pascoli.

L'autore scapigliato che più si avvicina alla letteratura del novecento è certamente I. Ugo Tarchetti; egli propone nella sua opera dei temi modernissimi, anche se per certi altri versi ricorda gli scritti romantici.

Fin dal suo romanzo Una nobile follia vediamo il protagonista che da eroe romantico alla 'Jacopo Ortis' diventa antieroe decadente: cerca l'autodistruzione, è affetto da masochismo, alterna momenti di lucidità a momenti di follia. Il motivo della perdita d'identità è affrontato in modo più approfondito nel racconto

'fantasticizzato' Storia di una gamba; qui il protagonista non crede più nei valori assoluti e non riesce a ritrovare se stesso, dice: '...non vedete che non ho più un centro...'. Se poi analizziamo quello che è considerato il più bel romanzo scapigliato, Fosca, troviamo un'altra tematica tipicamente decadente: il motivo della confusione di due figure femminili: il protagonista passeggia con una donna e pensa di essere con un'altra. Questo tema della condensazione di due persone in una lo riscontriamo anche nel Piacere di

106 D'Annunzio e, più avanti, in Senilità di Svevo. A tutte
 107 queste tematiche fa da cornice il gusto per il macabro e
 108 per l'orrido, per il corpo malato, in putrefazione,
 109 scheletrico, gusto ereditato dai poeti 'maudi' francesi,
 110 e che sarà proprio anche del decadentismo italiano. Da
 111 questo gusto deriva il binomio amore e morte o meglio,
 112 amore e malattia così caro al Tarchetti, che ho
 113 ripetutamente preso come esempio in quanto uno dei
 114 massimi esponenti della Scapigliatura.
 115 # Tenendo conto di tutto ciò, considerare il movimento
 116 scapigliato come epigono del Romanticismo sarebbe, a mio
 117 avviso, limitativo; si tratta di un movimento di
 118 transizione che porta con sé nostalgicamente alcuni
 119 elementi del passato e ne anticipa di nuovi, con la
 120 sensibilità che solo gli scrittori possono avere.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I7 MARK: 22 WORDS: 814

SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE

TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo?

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Centrato e sufficientemente corretto

1 # Letterati del rifiuto furono certo gli scapigliati,
 2 rifiuto di riconoscere nel sistema di valori e di modelli
 3 che la società borghese va affermando, di abbracciare la
 4 logica del guadagno e asservirsi a un potere malato
 5 <malato underlined by the lecturer> e corrotto. E'
 6 significativo, in questo senso, che attecchiscono
 7 soprattutto in area lombarda, e in una città come Milano
 8 dove più chiaro appariva il contrasto fra un 'vecchio'
 9 nobile e amato e un 'nuovo' violento e incomprensibile.
 10 Per primi avvertono il disagio, il senso di emarginazione
 11 dell'artista rispetto a modelli che il ceto produttivo va
 12 imponendo alla società, a scelgono, per affermare la
 13 propria esclusione, ogni forma di provocazione, di
 14 scandalo, di dissacrazione antiperbenista. Tutto e il
 15 contrario di tutto si può affermare e sostenere riguardo
 16 agli scapigliati, come riguardo a tutti i letterati
 17 scissi fra tendenze oppostive, e vittime di un dualismo
 18 dilaniante. Essi assorbono elementi di tradizioni
 19 diverse assimilandoli in una sintesi spesso disomogenea,
 20 frammentaria, poco sistematica, ma sicuramente
 21 avanguardistica e nuova. Furono gli scapigliati,
 22 letterati eclettici e difficilmente riconducibili a
 23 schemi precostituiti, <last word underlined by the
 24 lecturer> per i quali si può certo affermare che furono
 25 insieme estrema appendice romantica e anticipazione
 26 decadente.

27 # Romantici furono, certamente. Non raggiunsero la
 28 titanica grandezza <3 last words underlined> dei nostri
 29 primi romantici, né si ripiegarono totalmente nel
 30 lamentevole compiacimento di un Aleardi o di un Prati.
 31 Afferirono piuttosto al romanticismo tedesco prima
 32 maniera, da cui ripresero le tematiche scioccanti,
 33 <underlined by the lecturer> gli elementi macabri di

dissolvimento, di morte, l'eroticismo latente e frustrato, la religiosità mistica e anticlericale. La religiosità di un Praga, per esempio, recuperata nei ricordi d'infanzia (Inno a Pio IX) e in un passionale intimismo, ricorda quella di un Novalis che, nei suoi Inni alla notte, rifiuta, come Praga, di identificarsi in qualsiveglia qualunque religione 'rivelata', e propone una gerarchia di valori coraggiosa e solo apparentemente oppositiva <lecturer underlined from coraggiosa>, dove Dio è da ricercare nel buio della notte, nella morte.

#La Natura, altro tema caro ai romantici, viene ripresa e idealizzata nella sua veste di incontaminata bellezza, e assurge a grande vittima della società borghese. Se per i romantici tedeschi essa rappresentava il mondo della fantasia, il rifugio più ambito per sfuggire alle 'cattiverie' del mondo e ritrovare se stessi, se per Leopardi essa assurgeva antropomorficamente <last 2 words underlined by the lecturer> a Madre-matrigna del genere umano, negli animi scapigliati, deboli e malati, essa veniva recuperata idillicamente, sì come ideale rifugio, ma anche come amica e alleata che, insieme all'artista, sta perdendo posto e importanza nella società, sta subendo le ingiustizie di logiche egoistiche e fuorvianti. Ecco quindi il lamento di un Praga (La strada ferrata) di un Boito (Case nuove), concordi nell'affermare il loro sgomento, la rabbia di fronte alle demolizioni folli e insensate di un'epoca stolta e cinica, che distrugge le belle vecchie case e i monasteri e cancella un tempo di valori e certezze. Così, il cieco che si-smarrirebbe non trova la strada disorientato dall'assetto nuovo della sua città (Boito, Case nuove), diventa simbolo di tutta una generazione di 'smarriti', di 'sradicati', disorientati dai disvalori capitalisti e, se mi è permessa un'altra personale analogia, 'ciechi' alle esigenze dello sviluppo.

Da queste posizioni al solipsismo decadente il passo, in fondo, è breve. Malati di maladettismo, emuli, un poco provinciali, dei loro fratelli d'oltralpe, ma fermi al rifiuto, al disagio all'insofferenza piuttosto che capaci di effettive proposte, gli scapigliati avevano, forse inconsciamente, aperto la strada alla grande 'malattia decadente', che, di lì a poco, avrebbe popolato anche la nostra letteratura di ribelli, di antieroi, di inetti, di super-uomini, ~~ma~~ e avrebbe soprattutto trovato un linguaggio per esprimere quello che qualcuno definì il 'disagio della società'. Se vogliamo credere in una sottile continuità fra Romanticismo e Decadentismo, come alcuni critici vanno sostenendo, allora gli scapigliati potrebbero fornirci l'anello di congiunzione a conferma dell'esistenza, più o meno latente, di una 'malinconia romantica' o di una 'malattia decadente' che sottostà a tutti i tempi.

Decadente è l'amore di Tarchetti per il malato, il patologico, il brutto (Fosca), il suo inserire elementi di schizofrenia, di metempsicosi, di bisessualità, di

onirismo, che aiutano a formare <lecturer underlined last 3 words> il sostrato culturale al lavoro di Freud <lecturer underlined last 5 words> e della psicologia moderna. Ma decadente è soprattutto l'incacacità di scegliere fra 'ennui' e 'ideal', fra angelo e demone, e la consapevolezza di non saper neanche trovare una giusta mediazione fra queste tendenze diverse e laceranti. Sono gli scapigliati, quindi, vittime di un dualismo doloroso che, se nel Boito si riduce prettamente <lecturer underlined last word> a un gioco stilistioco-formale, in Praga e Tarchetti diventa, con le sue implicazioni moralistico-religiose, motivo di sofferenza e, in ultima analisi, causa di morte precoce. Questo dualismo appare, quindi, chiaro precursore <lecturer underlined last two words> di un'epoca in cui si parlerà addirittura di pluralismo, di moltiplicazione del soggetto, di 'io come delirio di molti'.

La rivolta scapigliata resta però solo un fragile lamento, non riesce mai a farsi grido coraggioso e temerario, ma si rinchiude in un pianto sommesso e inconsolabile; resterà una ribellione nuova e in parte giusta ma debole e sterile; l'agonia di una generazione di sconfitti.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I8 MARK: 24 WORDS: 992

SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE

TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo?

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Focalizza correttamente la posizione storico-culturale del movimento scapigliato.

La Scapigliatura, prima ancora che un modo di intendere i fenomeni artistici e culturali, è un modo di vivere che fiorisce a Milano nel decennio 1860/70. All'indomani dell'unità nazionale forze confuse non ancora orientate <lecturer underlined last 5 words> , spinte vivaci mosse verso il rinnovamento sociale, si mescolano; la Scapigliatura nasce dunque come movimento polemico in questo clima: diventa ostentazione, gusto per lo scandalo, provocazione.

Il primo a utilizzare il termine 'Scapigliatura' è Cletto Arrighi nel suo romanzo La Scapigliatura e il 6 febbraio per indicare non un movimento letterario, ma un fatto di costume; il termine ha fortuna e passa poi a indicare tutto quello che nella vita milanese fra il 1860 e il '90 poteva apparire fuori norma.

Fra gli scapigliati circolavano idee confuse, ma essi avevano in comune un'irrequietezza, un malessere, che li avrebbe caratterizzati agli occhi del pubblico come un irritante gruppo di innovatori nemici dei benpensanti. E in effetti l'Arrighi definisce la Scapigliatura come 'serbatoio del disordine, dell'irrequietezza, dell'opposizione a tutti gli ordini stabiliti'. Nonostante ciò la Scapigliatura è il primo fenomeno di rilievo ad affacciarsi alle letterature italiane a

Risorgimento concluso, quando l'Italia si trova costretta a fronteggiare una situazione molto difficile soprattutto dal punto di vista economico. Messa a confronto con un mondo che faceva passi da gigante in ogni campo (si pensi all'America e al Giappone) l'Italia possedeva ancora delle strutture davvero arretrate; solo lentamente c'è una ripresa, in particolare in Lombardia, ripresa che comporta la riorganizzazione delle strutture economico-sociali ma anche, e soprattutto, mentali <mentali underlined by the lecturer>.

Non bisogna dimenticare inoltre, il 'vuoto ideale' che caratterizza i primi anni post-unitari quando, conclusosi il Risorgimento, sembra non ci siano più obiettivi da raggiungere. Questa situazione è delineata dal Chabod nell'opera La politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896, in cui è illustrato molto bene lo stato mentale <mentale underlined by the lecturer> degli italiani (e in particolare degli intellettuali) dopo il ciclo eroico delle lotte per l'unità. Chabod sostiene che mancavano ideali concreti da surrogare agli ideali che avevano animato l'epoca risorgimentale: gli intellettuali non si sentivano più parte necessaria della società ma emarginati, privati del loro ruolo attivo all'interno della comunità. Il rapporto degli Scapigliati con la realtà nella quale sono inseriti è quindi molto complicato: è una società nella quale vige un implacabile logica economica e per l'arte sembra non esserci più spazio, poiché diventa 'un lusso da scioperati' come sosteneva il Verga nell'introduzione al romanzo Eva del 1873. Da questa insoddisfazione nasce la polemica degli scapigliati i quali si ribellano ai valori della società borghese e alla cultura precedente senza però riuscire a proporre un programma realmente nuovo: proprio per questo un critico, Walter Binni, sostiene che il valore della Scapigliatura è sicuramente storico ma quasi nullo artisticamente. Gli Scapigliati, cioè, concepiscono il nuovo solo come opposizione al vecchio rimanendo così legati al passato.

Gli Scapigliati sono eredi involontari di una cultura romantica che in Italia aveva avuto uno sviluppo particolare: il Romanticismo italiano mancava dell'assoluto irrazionalismo e misticismo che aveva caratterizzato le altre nazioni europee, in particolare la Francia e la Germania. L'atteggiamento del movimento scapigliato verso il Romanticismo è complesso: se da una parte c'è il rifiuto di quelli che sono i valori romantici (l'onore, la donna come essere divino, la religione, l'amicizia...), dall'altra, in alcuni casi, questi valori vengono riproposti, di conseguenza c'è la ricaduta in un sentimentalismo prettamente romantico. È interessante a questo proposito citare un'opera di uno dei più maggiori autori scapigliati: Una nobile follia di Iginio Ugo Tarchetti. In questo romanzo, infatti, si può notare una pars destruens, una parte cioè in cui c'è una violenta critica verso i valori romantici e risorgimentali quali la guerra, l'onore, l'epica, <last

word underlined by lecturer>, ma anche una pars
 construens in cui c'è il recupero di concetti romantici:
 l'amore per la donna considerata capace di purificare
 l'uomo, l'esaltazione dell'arte come mezzo per avvicinare
 l'uomo a Dio, la presenza di Dio in tutte le cose. Il
 protagonista dell'opera, lo pseudo-Vincenzo D., è un
 personaggio che a un certo momento appare come un tipico
 eroe romantico, si può addirittura parlare di titanismo
 byroniano (il giovane si sente portatore di un messaggio
 di pace nella società) ma successivamente finisce per
 isolarsi misantropicamente dalla realtà che ha scosso la
 sua fede nella bontà naturale dell'uomo, diventando
 quindi quasi un eroe decadente, o meglio, un antieroe
 decadente.

Anche un altro grande autore scapigliato, Emilio Praga,
 riflette nelle sue poesie un rapporto dualistico con il
 Romanticismo: da un lato in affetti si rivela del tutto
 lontano da quelli che sono i temi romantici, basti
 pensare alla poesia Preludio tratta <tratta underlined by
 lecturer> dalla raccolta Penombre, in cui si denota <si
 denota underlined by lecturer> lo sgomento per la
 mancanza di modelli ai quali riferirsi: '...noi siamo
 figli dei padri ammalati/ e svolazziam muti nell'agonia
 di un nume...', dall'altro si riavvicina al Romanticismo
 nelle poesie appartenenti al versante nostalgico-idillico
 (fra le quali si possono ricordare Nox, I Re Magi, A mia
 madre, Memorie del presbiterio) in cui la religione è
 recuperata, così come lo sono i ricordi dell'infanzia, e
 appare chiara la volontà di riavvicinarsi a Dio.

Nella poesia Preludio, inoltre, il Praga si scaglia
 contro il Manzoni: 'casto poeta che l'Italia adora /
 vegliardo in sante visioni assorto / ...degli antecristi
 è l'ora / Cristo è rimorto!', considerandolo simbolo di
 quella società e quella cultura alle quali gli
 Scapigliati si ribellavano, ma allo stasseo tempo, nella
 poesia Manzoni (tratta <lecturer underlined tratta> dalla
 raccolta Trasparenze) ricorda con affetto il grande
 letterato che aveva saputo fondere poesia e realtà, bello
 e utile, e che quindi era un modello per quella
 generazione di poeti incapaci di trovare un contatto con
 il mondo al quale appartenevano.

E' difficile quindi parlare di Scapigliatura come
 appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo poiché è un
 movimento complesso, difficilmente definibile e
 inseribile in un sistema unitario. Quello che è certo è
 che la Scapigliatura ha risentito dell'eredità romantica,
 non accettandone comunque passivamente tutti gli aspetti,
 e ha preparato la strada al movimento decadente, senza
 per questo essere un anticipo di decadentismo.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I9 MARK: 20/30 WORDS: 985
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1991 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-Decadentismo?
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: Sufficientemente informato; qualche
 <?> linguistica

- 1 # La Scapigliatura, per certi aspetti, può essere
- 2 considerata una continuazione del Romanticismo, ma ci
- 3 presenta anche numerosi temi che caratterizzeranno il
- 4 Decadentismo. <lecturer underlined 'ci' and 'temi'>
- 5 # Alcuni critici vedono la Scapigliatura come una sorta
- 6 di secondo Romanticismo, in quanto gli Scapigliati
- 7 ~~prediligono~~ recuperano i temi legati al mondo
- 8 dell'irrazionale, come l'onirismo, la magia, lo
- 9 spiritismo, il subconscio, tutti elementi legati
- 10 soprattutto al primo Romanticismo tedesco.
- 11 # La Scapigliatura però si pone in netta opposizione
- 12 di fronte <underlined by lecturer> ai valori romantici,
- 13 anche perché nasce in una situazione molto diversa da
- 14 quella in cui si era sviluppato il Risorgimento: con il
- 15 raggiungimento dell'unità d'Italia ci si trova di fronte
- 16 <underlined by lecturer> a numerosi problemi che
- 17 porteranno gli intellettuali italiani ad una generale
- 18 insoddisfazione: innanzitutto c'è una situazione di vuoto
- 19 ideale in quanto, finito il Risorgimento, non ci sono più
- 20 obiettivi da raggiungere; inoltre vi sono numerosi
- 21 problemi da risolvere: l'enorme miseria, l'analfabetismo,
- 22 la diversità tra nord e sud.
- 23 # Il disagio è acuito dalla mancata gloria militare
- 24 causata sia dal fatto che l'Italia non è ancora
- 25 completamente unita, sia per le sconfitte subite
- 26 soprattutto nel tentativo di conquistare delle colonie.
- 27 <lecturer underlined from 'di'> La borghesia inoltre
- 28 sembra aver dimenticato gli ideali che l'avevano guidata
- 29 nelle lotte risorgimentali, e i suoi unici valori
- 30 sembrano essere ora la ricchezza e il potere.
- 31 # Cambia notevolmente anche la funzione del letterato:
- 32 mentre nella prima metà dell'800 <lecturer signals that
- 33 something is missing> faceva propri gli ideali romantici,
- 34 aveva una sua importanza nella società, la sua funzione
- 35 era attiva e pedagogica, dopo il 1860 egli sente di aver
- 36 perso il suo ruolo, non è più poeta-vate, come evidenzia
- 37 Praga nelle poesie Spes unica e All'amico, in cui è messa
- 38 in risalto anche l'incomprensione del pubblico. In questa
- 39 situazione i valori romantici tendono naturalmente a
- 40 scomparire, ma non completamente: caratteristiche
- 41 principali degli Scapigliati sono le contraddizioni, le
- 42 incertezze; la loro situazione di dualismo si nota
- 43 soprattutto nel loro rapporto con il Romanticismo: pur
- 44 criticandoli e dissacrandoli, essi in fondo auspicano un
- 45 ritorno agli ideali romantici per porre fine alla
- 46 mancanza di certezze, al dubbio, che rendono loro la vita
- 47 così difficile da sopportare.
- 48 # Praga stesso, ad esempio, nelle poesie che fanno parte
- 49 del filone patetico-nostalgico, spera in un ritorno ai

valori in cui credeva da bambino perché lo rendevano felice, mentre ora è pieno di contraddizioni e non crede più a niente. Anche Tarchetti ci dimostra, soprattutto in Una nobile follia, questo rapporto di amore-odio che hanno gli Scapigliati con il Romanticismo: in questo romanzo c'è una forte polemica antiborghese, antirisorgimentale, anti monarchica, ma alcuni valori romantici vengono anche ripresi: Vincenzo D. crede profondamente nell'amore, nell'amicizia, nella famiglia, nella religione.

L'esempio più evidente di come gli Scapigliati si pongono di fronte <corrected> al Romanticismo ci viene dato dal duplice rapporto che essi hanno con Manzoni: il grande scrittore ottocentesco viene visto come simbolo dei valori romantici e per questo viene spesso criticato e denigrato dagli Scapigliati, che naturalmente non credono più in quei valori.

Allo stesso tempo però viene anche ammirato e invidiato per la sua enorme importanza storica e letteraria, soprattutto perché gli Scapigliati invece non riescono a tradurre le loro idee in una poetica e in uno stile originali.

Non a caso mentre prima era Manzoni ad essere considerato un modello dai letterati italiani, gli Scapigliati ora prendono come esempio Rovani, non tanto per la sua poetica, quanto perché lo considerano l'anti-manzoni per eccellenza: Rovani, infatti, al moralismo, al sentimentalismo religioso e patriottico di Manzoni, contrappone la sua vita dissipata e i suoi 'valori' personali: l'alcool, le osterie, le donne.

Gli Scapigliati sono legati al Manzoni da un rapporto d'amore-odio e ce lo dimostra soprattutto Praga che parla del grande scrittore romantico in 2 poesie: nella prima, intitolata Preludio, egli critica duramente Manzoni: per lui devono morire il Cristianesimo, la letteratura precedente e Manzoni stesso, per lasciare posto agli Scapigliati anticristi. In Manzoni, invece, scritta qualche anno dopo, egli tratta lo scrittore con affetto, auspicando un ritorno agli ideali del passato di cui Manzoni è <lecturer underlined 'e' without accent> emblema. Gli Scapigliati hanno dunque ripreso, più o meno volontariamente, molti elementi romantici; anticipano comunque anche numerose caratteristiche proprie della poetica decadente.

Sia i poeti decadenti che gli Scapigliati rispondono alla situazione sociale, che entrambi non approvano, secondo poetiche e soluzioni individuali molto diverse tra loro.

Molto vicini al Decadentismo sono gli Scapigliati che appartengono al filone del formalismo <'formalismo' underlined by the lecturer>: per Camillo Boito, Arrigo Boito, Luigi Gualdo, il dualismo, la caratteristica principale degli Scapigliati, non è un fatto interiore, psicologico, ma si traduce in giochi formali costituiti da parallelismi, contrasti, antitesi, ed esempio di ciò è la poesia Dualismo di Boito.

106 # Le loro poesie sono molto elaborate dal punto di vista
 107 della forma, niente è lasciato al caso: si rifanno al
 108 concetto di 'art pour art' proprio di Gautier, che dà il
 109 via a quella corrente che poi prenderà il nome di
 110 parnassianesimo, secondo cui l'arte e la bellezza sono
 111 gli unici valori validi.
 112 # In Gualdo soprattutto questo estetismo, molto vicino a
 113 quello decadente, è particolarmente accentuato. Molti
 114 temi presenti negli Scapigliati vengono ripresi dagli
 115 scrittori decadenti; ad esempio il tema della fusione
 116 delle due donne presente in Fosca di Tarchetti, in cui il
 117 protagonista vede in Fosca alcune cose <'cose' underlined
 118 by lecturer> che gli ricordano Clara, come il profumo o i
 119 capelli, è presente anche nel Piacere di D'Annunzio, dove
 120 Andrea Sperelli finisce per confondere la sua amante con
 121 quella precedente.
 122 # Possiamo ritrovare il tema del recupero dell'infanzia,
 123 che ci ricorda Pascoli, nelle poesie di Praga,
 124 soprattutto ne I Re Magi, dove il poeta si ricorda
 125 tramite l'immagine dei re Magi, tutta la sua infanzia,
 126 che era felice perché piena di valori <lecturer
 127 underlined 'piena'> in cui credere.
 128 # E' impossibile stabilire l'appartenenza della
 129 Scapigliatura al Romanticismo o al Decadentismo;
 130 trovandosi in mezzo a questi due movimenti letterari è
 131 chiaro che i legami che questa corrente ha con entrambi
 132 sono molto intensi ma ci sono anche molti elementi
 133 originali, se non nella poetica, almeno nelle idee di
 134 fondo.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I10 MARK: 21 WORDS: 1090
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-
 Decadentismo?
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: Fondamentalmente corretto, ma con
 sciatteria formale

1 # La Scapigliatura è il primo fenomeno culturale di una
 2 certa importanza che si prospetta <lecturer underlined
 3 'prospetta'> nella letteratura italiana post-
 4 risorgimentale. L'Italia di questo periodo si presenta
 5 con tutti i problemi dell'unificazione appena avvenuta,
 6 che la cultura romantico-patriottica aveva coperto di
 7 sentimentalismo; ora questi problemi, dall'alfabetismo
 8 diffuso all'enorme miseria contadina, dal divario tra
 9 Nord e Sud all'industrializzazione crescente, sono
 10 diventati a carattere nazionale.
 11 # Quindi si viene a creare una certa insoddisfazione
 12 nella popolazione per l'Italia unificata e viene a cadere
 13 quel modello di patria da fare <lecturer underlined from
 14 'popolazione'> che costituiva per la cultura romantica un
 15 investimento per il desiderio di ideali; è proprio questa
 16 insoddisfazione e la dissociazione delle responsabilità
 17 <lecturer underlined last two words> tra artisti e
 18 potere costituito che porterà alla crisi del

19 Decadentismo. Questa intolleranza, che entrerà a far
 20 parte integrante della poetica degli Scapigliati, si
 21 presenta sotto due aspetti; dapprima come vuoto ideale in
 22 quanto, a Risorgimento concluso, non ci sono più
 23 obiettivi concreti da raggiungere o da poter sostituire
 24 [a] quelli risorgimentali, fenomeno questo osservato
 25 anche da Chabod in una sua opera.
 26 # Troviamo inoltre un malcontento per come si erano
 27 svolti i fatti per il raggiungimento dell'unificazione,
 28 in quanto la terza guerra di indipendenza si era
 29 verificata <lecturer underlined last word> con le
 30 infauste giornate di Custoza e Lissa e con l'annessione
 31 negoziata del Veneto; c'era quindi una mancanza di gloria
 32 militare che si ripercuoteva nella vita sociale e
 33 culturale italiana.
 34 # Un'altra ragione che contribuisce all'accrescimento di
 35 questo sentimento di malessere è il dominare nella
 36 borghesia del movente pratico-economico; tutti gli ideali
 37 tardo-romantici vanno scomparendo di fronte all'interesse
 38 economico industriale, e anche i ruoli sociali
 39 tradizionali vengono relegati ai margini della società.
 40 Ciò avviene anche per la figura del letterato; infatti
 41 nel periodo antecedente l'unificazione egli è molto
 42 attivo, la sua attività viene vista come una missione
 43 sociale e si identifica nella figura del poeta-vate;
 44 invece nel periodo post-unità perde il suo ruolo
 45 dominante e viene considerato come qualcosa di superfluo.
 46 # E' in questo ambito politico, sociale e culturale che
 47 si instaura il fenomeno della Scapigliatura, che ha la
 48 sua prima manifestazione importante nell'ambiente
 49 milanese soprattutto nel periodo 1860/1870. E' di questo
 50 decennio la fioritura straordinaria di giornali e di
 51 riviste che danno vita a una bohème italiana; è in questo
 52 ambito che troviamo una delle caratteristiche principali
 53 della Scapigliatura, cioè il suo legame con il
 54 giornalismo contemporaneo <lecturer signals lack of
 55 punctuation> in quanto nei suoi rappresentanti è presente
 56 l'assillo di crearsi uno spazio in quella dimensione
 57 giornalistica che è ancora l'unica componente del potere
 58 d'informazione.
 59 # Questo movimento si sviluppa dapprima a Milano poiché
 60 il clima della crisi è più sentito in quanto la
 61 tradizione, sia illuministica che romantica, di apertura
 62 verso le esperienze culturali europee, ha reso l'ambiente
 63 più sensibile alle influenze d'oltralpe.
 64 # I suoi esponenti, anche se diversissimi tra loro e non
 65 comunati <lecturer underlined last word> da una poetica
 66 simile, partecipano a questa atmosfera di rifiuto, di
 67 separazione dalla vita poetica curle <lecturer corrected
 68 this> e in questo è naturale che gli Scapigliati
 69 italiani guardassero alla Francia la quale aveva già due
 70 esperienze di bohémien <lecturer underlined last word>;
 71 quella di Nerval e Baudelaire da una parte e quella del
 72 'cenacle realiste' dall'altra.
 73 # Ma essi non guardano solo alle esperienze francesi
 74 bensì anche al Romanticismo italiano e in particolare

75 modo al Manzoni che veniva di riflesso contrapposto al
 76 modello degli Scapigliati, ovvero a Rovani. <lecturer
 77 drew a line on the side of this sentence> Infatti
 78 quest'ultimo veniva visto come anti-Manzoni in quanto
 79 alla storia opponeva la cronaca, all'oggettivismo
 80 l'accurata descrizione di particolari <lecturer
 81 underlined last three words> e al moralismo la vita
 82 scellerata <underlined by lecturer>, le donne e l'alcool.
 83 # Quindi il Rovani divenne il modello dell'artista in
 84 rotta con la società e di conseguenza il modello in
 85 primis <underlined by lecturer> per i rappresentanti
 86 della Scapigliatura.
 87 # In essi c'era una sorta di rapporto odio/amore nei
 88 confronti di Manzoni e la loro predilezione per il Rovani
 89 equivaleva a una dichiarazione di rifugio nella poetica
 90 maledetta per non <lecturer underlined last two words>
 91 essere in grado di opporre alternative valide a quella
 92 manzoniana.
 93 #? Nei confronti del Romanticismo non c'era solo questo
 94 atteggiamento di repulsione in quanto il grande
 95 Romanticismo tedesco aveva aperto le porte all'onirico,
 96 al magico e all'istintualità, tutti temi che verranno
 97 ripresi nelle opere degli Scapigliati.
 98 #? E' infatti per questo motivo che la scapigliatura
 99 venne definita come il secondo romanticismo lombardo;
 100 essa operava una rottura con gli schemi tradizionali
 101 della cultura borghese attraverso il ritorno ai temi
 102 irrazionalistici del romanticismo tedesco specialmente
 103 per quelli del demonismo, dell'angelismo, del funebre e
 104 dell'oniricità. <lecturer underlined from 'tedesco'>
 105 # Anche se la Scapigliatura non fu propriamente una
 106 scuola con una poetica ben definita, in essa si possono
 107 distinguere due filoni fondamentali; da un lato quello
 108 tendente al formalismo e dall'altro quello poetico-
 109 nostalgico.
 110 #? Il filone formalistico si riallaccia alle poetiche
 111 dell'arte per l'arte attraverso le quali la letteratura
 112 francese tende a fare dell'arte il luogo della bellezza e
 113 dell'immortalità, questo atteggiamento verrà poi ripreso
 114 e analizzato <lecturer underlined last word> da
 115 D'Annunzio che farà di Andrea Sperelli l'emblema di
 116 questa condotta estetizzante.
 117 #? Per quanto riguarda l'altra tendenza, quella cioè
 118 nostalgico-idillica, troviamo in Praga la soluzione del
 119 dualismo in termini di conflitto interiore, nostalgico
 120 <underlined by lecturer> dell'infanzia ed esperienza
 121 della realtà opprimente. Ma è specialmente Tarchetti a
 122 raggiungere delle posizioni estreme; in lui il dualismo
 123 ritorna al contrasto romantico tra reale e ideale, dove
 124 il reale è la vita naturale, mentre l'ideale è il non-
 125 esistente, la morte e quindi il suo dualismo si risolve
 126 in un'opposizione tra la vita e la morte.
 127 # In questi autori appartenenti a questo filone si
 128 possono trovare tre possibile forme di descrizione del
 129 conflitto interiore; nel recupero dell'infanzia con i
 130 suoi incontaminati ricordi, nel recupero della fede

131 religiosa o nella consapevolezza di un passato
132 irrecuperabile.
133 # Questo secondo aspetto della poetica scapigliata si
134 riallaccia quindi sia al Romanticismo che al Decadentismo
135 in quanto anche in Leopardi e in Pascoli troviamo questo
136 conflitto interiore, questa insofferenza verso ideali
137 troppo lontani dalla vita quotidiana e la meditazione
138 profonda nei confronti del singolo uomo.
139 # Anche per quanto riguarda le tre possibili soluzioni
140 per superare questa lacerazione si avvicinano a quelle
141 attuate dal Leopardi; basti pensare alle poesie A Silvia
142 e Il sabato del villaggio nelle quali c'è un ritorno alle
143 origini, all'epoca felice della giovinezza nella quale il
144 poeta si rifugia per trovare qualche momento di serenità.
145 # E anche nel Pascoli con la sua poetica del fanciullino
146 troviamo questa necessità di ritorno all'infanzia come
147 unica epoca veramente poetica e pura.
148 # Quindi la Scapigliatura deve venir intesa non come una
149 corrente a se stante bensì l'anello di congiunzione tra
150 la cultura romantica e quella decadente, come lo specchio
151 di una mentalità che ha attraversato il periodo di crisi
152 della società italiana cercando di trovare nuovi stimoli
153 e nuovi ideali per superarla. <lecturer underlined last
154 word>

ITALIAN SCRIPT I11 MARK:24 WORDS: 1590
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-Decadentismo?
 LECTURER'S COMMENTS: Organico, documentato

- 1 # La Scapigliatura è un movimento letterario italiano che
- 2 si colloca storicamente nella seconda metà del 1800 ed ha
- 3 il suo momento d'oro negli anni 70-80, con appendici
- 4 novecentesche. Il termine 'scapigliatura' esisteva già
- 5 nel vocabolario italiano del cinquecento-seicento, ma è
- 6 stato Cletto Arrighi in La Scapigliatura e il 6 febbraio
- 7 ad utilizzarlo per la prima volta quale traduzione del
- 8 termine francese 'bohème'. Gli scapigliati sono in genere
- 9 artisti poliedrici, che si dedicano contemporaneamente a
- 10 più arti e che conducono una vita sregolata e, per questo
- 11 molto spesso, breve.
- 12 # E' difficile, lo è sempre riunire più autori sotto una
- 13 stessa bandiera e generalizzare, parlando di loro come di
- 14 appartenenti ad una scuola letteraria, ma è ancora più
- 15 difficile e improprio farlo nel caso della Scapigliatura.
- 16 # Sono artisti, gli scapigliati, molto diversi e che, al
- 17 di là delle somiglianze esteriori sopra citate, possiamo
- 18 accomunare a livelli letterari grazie a due elementi
- 19 ricorrenti nelle loro opere: il tema del double e
- 20 l'ambivalenza ideologica. Tralasciamo qui il tema del
- 21 double e passiamo ad analizzare il secondo aspetto, che è
- 22 quello che ci riguarda più direttamente (anche se le due
- 23 tematiche non possono essere completamente dissociate).
- 24 # Storicamente dunque, la Scapigliatura si colloca in
- 25 ambito post-risorgimentale e proprio il Risorgimento
- 26 segna una frattura per quanto riguarda la posizione del
- 27 letterato nella società e nei confronti di essa.
- 28 #? Come sottolinea Federico Chabod in Storia della
- 29 politica estera italiana dal 1870 al 1896, c'è stato, nel
- 30 periodo successivo all'unificazione italiana, uno
- 31 svuotamento di ideali nei letterati, dovuto a tutta una
- 32 serie di fattori concomitanti (l'unificazione italiana
- 33 arrivata dopo tutta una serie di guerre estenuanti e di
- 34 insuccessi, il fallimento dei sogni di allargamento
- 35 coloniale, <last five words underlined by lecturer>
- 36 l'imporsi nella borghesia del fattore economico-pratico)
- 37 che hanno ridotto il letterato a rinchiudersi in sé e a
- 38 vivere nel culto delle proprie opere.
- 39 # Il letterato sente la propria condizione di emarginato
- 40 nella società. Il Carducci sottolinea il fatto che il
- 41 letterato italiano non abbia più un ruolo ben
- 42 determinato, né un pubblico ben definito al quale
- 43 rivolgersi. Carlo Dossi in Note azzurre e Giovanni Verga
- 44 nella prefazione di Eva si scagliano contro 'la società
- 45 delle banche e delle industrie'. Dunque l'arte è un
- 46 qualche cosa di scaduto, di obsoleto, di qui il desiderio
- 47 di rottura con il passato risorgimentale e pre-
- 48 risorgimentale, con il romanticismo in particolare. E'
- 49 questa una situazione che aveva avuto in Europa il suo
- 50 archetipo in Baudelaire, che era stata ripresa e

denunciata dai fratelli Goncourt e che però era iniziata ancora prima.

La data discriminante, che segna una cesura nella vita storica, politica e sociale è, a detta di molti critici, (Luckács, Hauser), il 1848. Il 1848 è l'anno delle grandi rivoluzioni, è l'anno in cui per la prima volta, dice Lucács, si ha lo scontro diretto tra la borghesia e il proletariato. In Italia, invece, si è in ritardo di una quindicina d'anni e sono proprio gli scapigliati i primi a sottolineare questa situazione. Essi rifiutano del Romanticismo il patriottismo retorico, il sentimentalismo sdolcinato; sono contro il Risorgimento per come è stato condotto e come si è concluso. La loro è comunque una situazione molto difficile da decifrare, <lecturer signals lack of precise punctuation> se rifiutano, per tutte queste ragioni, il Romanticismo, sono però pronti ad accogliere altri suoi valori. Pensiamo al Manzoni, che è pure pre-romantico <underlined by lecturer>; quando la Scapigliatura si va affermando egli è ancora vivo e gli scapigliati hanno un rapporto strano di 'amo et odio' <underlined by lecturer> nei suoi confronti.

Il Manzoni viene contestato non tanto per quello che la sua figura rappresenta dal punto di vista morale, quanto e soprattutto per la mancanza di sbocchi irrazionali nella sua opera.

Prendiamo due tra i più importanti scapigliati, Emilio praga e I.Ugo Tarchetti e vediamo come sia contraddittoria <lecturer corrected it> la loro posizione nei confronti del grande autore.

Il Tarchetti è coerente con se stesso nel criticare il Manzoni, lo fa in Storia di una gamba (nella parte finale in cui i tre protagonisti vanno a visitare i luoghi manzoniani), lo fa soprattutto nel manualetto <underlined by lecturer> Idee minime sul romanzo ('65) in cui afferma che I Promessi sposi sono la più importante opera <last word underlined> italiana perchè non c'è niente di meglio!

#? Il Praga invece in un primo tempo si allinea con questa posizione (vedi Preludio, poesia programmatica che fa parte della raccolta Penombre ('64) e nella quale c'è un attacco diretto al Manzoni), ma alla morte del maestro, nel 1873, gli dedica una poesia, invocandolo come propria musa ispiratrice e definendolo proprio maestro.

Il Tarchetti è l'autore in cui meglio si esplicita l'ambivalenza scapigliata, sotto ogni punto di vista. Egli crede nell'arte, nell'amore, nell'amicizia, in Dio.

L'arte e l'amore sono per lui due temi indissociabili, come traspare da molte opere e <lecturer signals wrong linking word> non a caso una raccolta di racconti si intitola L'amore nell'arte. L'arte è sentita dal Tarchetti come una missione, come un qualche cosa che ha il potere di elevare l'uomo dalla sua bassa condizione e in questo egli ha lo stesso atteggiamento di Hugo, di Lamartine. Ancora più dell'arte è idealizzata l'amicizia, tipico topos romantico, pensiamo, per citare un esempio,

107 a Le ultime lettere di Jacopo Ortis. Il Tarchetti è poi
 108 un uomo di fede, crede in un Dio che è ora forza
 109 immanente, ora elemento panteistico che permea di sé la
 110 realtà intera, e crede soprattutto nell'immortalità
 111 dell'anima. Tutto questo mentre in quegli anni il
 112 positivismo è imperante (ricordiamo che nel '66 c'è la
 113 pubblicazione di La filosofia positiva e il metodo
 114 storico del Villari, manifesto dell'ideologia positiva in
 115 Italia) e il Tarchetti, così come i romantici Tommaseo e
 116 Lambruschini, si scaglia violentemente contro il
 117 positivismo, sia esso materialismo, sia esso
 118 evoluzionismo darwiniano. Egli sostiene che tutti coloro
 119 che sono atei e scettici sono da condannare. Dunque il
 120 Tarchetti è romantico? No, non lo è, è tipicamente
 121 scapigliato. Vediamo infatti in un'opera come Una nobile
 122 follia l'esplicitazione del suo essere scapigliato. Da
 123 una parte, e questa può essere considerata la pars
 124 construens del romanzo, si ha la rappresentazione di temi
 125 romantici <'rappresentazione' underlined by lecturer>
 126 sopra elencati, ma dall'altra, nella pars destruens,
 127 questi stessi valori romantici finiscono con il ricadere
 128 su se stessi e diventare pre-decadenti.
 129 # L'arte, l'amore, la fede religiosa ad un certo momento
 130 vengono meno, Filippo Sporta, Vincenzo D., il
 131 protagonista del romanzo, finisce per non credere più a
 132 niente. Preso dalla disperazione si rinchiuso in casa, si
 133 estranea dalla società (possiamo vedere in questo come
 134 egli precorra la figura di Des Esseintes in A' rebours di
 135 Huysman) e alla fine il suo suicidio ha il sapore dello
 136 scontro tra il titano romantico, di stampo byroniano, e
 137 la società in cui vive; scontro che si dimostra impari e
 138 che trasforma l'eroe romantico in autore decadente.
 139 # Lo pseudo-Vincenzo D. ad un certo punto inizia a
 140 paventare la distruzione di sé e degli altri, si arriva
 141 ad un nichilismo assoluto. Interviene in lui la categoria
 142 del dubbio che è molto moderna e rappresenta, secondo il
 143 Praga, la forma mentis degli scapigliati, in opposizione
 144 alle sicurezze del Manzoni, di Goethe, di Foscolo.
 145 # Altri romanzi del Tarchetti ci introducono a temi quali
 146 quello del doppio come fusione <underlined by the
 147 lecturer> tra due donne, del passaggio <underlined by
 148 lecturer> di identità, dello spiritismo, temi che saranno
 149 poi ripresi dalla letteratura successiva. In Fosca
 150 abbiamo la contrapposizione tra Fosca e Clara, che poi
 151 finiscono per diventare, nell'immaginario del poeta,
 152 un'unica donna, si crea cioè quella fusione (o
 153 condensazione onirica, per dirla alla Freud), che poi
 154 troveremo in Tigre reale di Verga e ne Il Piacere di
 155 D'Annunzio, in cui c'è la sovrapposizione delle figure di
 156 Elena Muti e quella di Maria Ferres.
 157 # Sempre in Una nobile follia vediamo che F. Sporta
 158 diventa Vincenzo D. dopo aver trovato il cadavere di un
 159 ricco borghese e averne assunta l'identità e questo è un
 160 finale <lecturer underlined from 'e'to 'finale'>
 161 tipicamente pirandelliano, si pensi a Il fu Mattia
 162 Pascal, il cui protagonista dopo aver fatto una grossa

163 vincita al casinò, cambia identità e diventa Adriano
 164 Meis. Quanto al tema dello spiritismo, presente in Uno
 165 spirito in un lampone, I fatali, Riccardo Waitzen, esso
 166 sarà ripreso da Luigi Capuana in Spiritismo.
 167 # E' infine un tema decadente quello del dualismo
 168 scapigliato, teorizzato da A. Boito in Dualismo, poesia
 169 facente parte della raccolta Il libro dei versi (77), in
 170 cui c'è una contrapposizione tra l'ideale e il reale,
 171 l'assoluto e l'infimo ('Son luce ed ombra; angelica
 172 Farfalla o verme immondo...').
 173 # Quello del dualismo è un tema caro agli scapigliati, un
 174 tema che essi hanno ereditato da Baudelaire, da Heine.
 175 Tralasciamo qui la differenziazione tra dualismo formale,
 176 alla Boito e dualismo 'patetico', alla Tarchetti o Praga,
 177 cosa che ci porterebbe un po' fuori dal nostro discorso e
 178 spieghiamo brevemente che cosa si intende per dualismo.
 179 Il dualismo è la contrapposizione tra due realtà
 180 antitetiche che albergano all'interno dell'animo della
 181 medesima persona (sia per finzione letteraria, sia per
 182 effettiva realtà psicologica) e che portano ad uno
 183 sdoppiamento del proprio io, della propria personalità.
 184 Il tema dell'io diviso è un tema appena abbozzato dagli
 185 scapigliati che troverà la sua più completa espressione
 186 nella letteratura del nostro secolo, in Proust prima
 187 <underlined by lecturer from 'in' to 'prima'>, fino ad
 188 arrivare a Pirandello con Uno, nessuno, centomila.
 189 # Concludendo, ritengo centrata l'osservazione <last two
 190 words underlined by lecturer> di Alberto Asor Rosa, il
 191 quale interpreta come ambiguità quest'ambivalenza
 192 scapigliata nata, a suo parere, dall'incapacità di dare
 193 una spiegazione a se stessi e da una debolezza mentale
 194 <last two words underlined by the lecturer> che fa sì che
 195 questi autori non riescano ad uscire da certi schemi,
 196 formali e morali, già prefissati.
 197 # Gli scapigliati, dunque, tardo romantici o pre-
 198 decadenti? A mio giudizio tardo-romantici e pre-decadenti
 199 insieme.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I12 MARK: 20 WORDS: 820
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o
 predecadentismo?

LECTURER REMARKS: Sufficientemente informato, ma scrive sciattamente

1 # A compimento del travagliato processo che aveva portato
 2 all'unificazione nazionale, <?> in Italia una prima
 3 reazione di un gruppo di intellettuali organizzati nella
 4 corrente della Scapigliatura, termine designato <last
 5 word underlined by lecturer> ad indicare un gruppo di
 6 giovani turbolenti, irrequieti ed eccentrici. L'ansia di
 7 diversità che li animava era determinata da un profondo
 8 senso di disagio e di delusione per la situazione
 9 politica e storica. Infatti, a differenza di quanto essi
 10 stessi avevano sperato, vivevano in un'Italia spenta e

burocrate <last word underlined> che a fatica organizzava la sua industrializzazione.

E' proprio contro questa età del profitto e delle speculazioni che si accaniscono con maggior veemenza, in opere dense di accorate denunce.

Il Dossi, in Note azzurre, dice che per le strade si parla di denaro, numeri e Borsa. Il Boito in Case nuove si ricollega all'abbattimento del vecchio centro storico di Milano, sostituito da nuove costruzioni impersonali e prive di valore artistico. Ma soprattutto il Tarchetti nelle pagine di Paolina si focalizza sulla distruzione del Coperto dei Figini nel cuore di Milano: motivo questo di grande dolore e dispiacere, dal momento che si attua tutta una rete di ricordi ed affetti legati a un luogo che cessa di esistere per sempre.

Tutto questo testimonia un legame con il passato connotato da sfumature romantiche, ma non si deve dimenticare la caratteristica propria degli Scapigliati: ovvero il moto di ripudio dell'ufficiale, del canonico e del facente parte della tradizione consolidata.

Ecco che compare il topos scapigliato del dualismo, della ricerca del nuovo ed allo stesso tempo del ripiegamento nostalgico verso ciò che è vecchio. <lecturer signals necessity of new paragraph> Questa molteplicità del soggetto testimonia che l'uomo non è un essere unitario ma complesso, e che la sua vita procede fra opposte polarità di luce ed ombra. Si deve qui ricordare la poesia del Boito Dualismo, in cui si inaugura questa categoria poi ripresa dagli altri poeti del movimento. Egli <last word underlined by lecturer> fa la distinzione tra verme e farfalla, demone e angelo; dice di voler rider dolce e amaro; di bestemmiare e pregare; infine sogna un'arte nuova, non riconducibile ad alcuna regola fissa.

Credo che proprio la loro ambiguità, come è stata definita dal critico Asor Rosa, ed il loro muoversi con facilità da atteggiamenti blasfemi al recupero dei valori irrisi, sia un esempio della loro debolezza. Essi si ribellano, ma non in modo efficace: non propongono infatti una valida alternativa con cui lottare, secondariamente il loro programma è vago e poco approfondito.

Questa loro ambivalenza è anche presente in uno dei fondatori originari <last two words underlined by lecturer> della Scapigliatura milanese: Emilio Praga. Da una lato emerge ad esempio la rievocazione idilliaca dell'infanzia, in I Re Magi, e della felicità di quei tempi in cui il Praga si sentiva come un re. Anche in A mia madre per esempio, <lecturer signals that something is missing> ricorda la fanciullezza, la famiglia, l'affetto per la madre. Ma nello stesso autore connive un aspetto satirico, derisorio e dissacrante delle pratiche e dei riti della religione. Ricorderemo Ritratti antichi in cui <lecturer signals that something is missing> inveisce contro un ritratto di cardinale.

66 # Tutti questi autori analizzati, si rendono conto che il
 67 passato romantico si è concluso e si è creato un periodo
 68 di rottura, quello in cui appunto vivono, dai contorni
 69 non ben delineati.
 70 # Ed è proprio il coraggio di proporre una soluzione
 71 nuova che manca loro, anche se accennano ad un
 72 rinnovamento.
 73 # Manca ora da analizzare l'opera del Tarchetti, che
 74 ritengo sia il poeta <last word underlined by lecturer>
 75 scapigliato che più degli altri abbia manifestato una
 76 componente di modernità, sempre però accompagnata da
 77 qualche residuo romantico.
 78 # Nel romanzo Una nobile follia, di matrice <underlined
 79 by lecturer> anti-militaristica, ricompaiono le due
 80 componenti. Da una parte sono ripresi certi valori del
 81 Romanticismo, quali l'amore, l'arte come qualcosa di
 82 nobilitante, infine l'amicizia addirittura superiore ai
 83 legami di sangue. Il personaggio principale, lo pseudo-
 84 Vincenzo D. che abbandona il campo di battaglia e diserta
 85 per profondo orrore della guerra, rifiuta il mondo
 86 circostante e si rinchiude in se stesso, sprofondando
 87 nell'isolamento. Alla fine il giovane romantico, che
 88 voleva introdurre i propri ideali ancora intatti nella
 89 società fallisce nella sua impresa e viene sopraffatto
 90 dall'antieroe decadente, incapace di agire nella pratica.
 91 Ecco che qui compare la tematica del dubbio, del
 92 frantumarsi di tutte le certezze romantiche e del calare
 93 della tragedia sull'uomo, non più sicuro nemmeno di se
 94 stesso. Vincenzo D. è un personaggio dissociato: e così
 95 si presenta anche il protagonista contemporaneo.
 96 <lecturer underlined from the colon> Il Tarchetti si
 97 dimostra così avanguardista: <last two words underlined
 98 by lecturer> con il suo elogio del dubbio e della
 99 relatività delle cose si propone come un precursore, un
 100 anticipatore di tematiche moderne. E' importante rilevare
 101 una qualche analogia fra Una nobile follia ed Il fu
 102 Mattia Pascal di Pirandello. Entrambi i personaggi
 103 vogliono cambiare, distruggendo una maschera opprimente
 104 per ricercare una nuova realtà.
 105 # Anche in Storia di una gamba si rinvergono spunti
 106 notevoli: la gamba 'morta' di Eugenio che si stacca dal
 107 corpo ed esercita sull'uomo una tale attrazione da
 108 spingerlo alla tomba ci riconduce ad un individuo
 109 diverso, privo di centro e conseguentemente di certezze.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I13 MARK: 22 WORDS: 1558
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-
 Decadentismo?

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Qualche errore in un contesto
 complessivamente apprezzabile

MY REMARKS: several corrections in punctuation have not
 been recorded

Per poter apprezzare la Scapigliatura dobbiamo considerare il periodo in cui si sviluppa tale fenomeno, e cioè il decennio che va dal 1860 al 1870. Un buon metro d'analisi è quello che parte dal generale della fenomenologia ed arriva al particolare, cioè all'embrione del fenomeno stesso. Per generale intendiamo la situazione dell'Italia post-risorgimentale (che non è delle più floride!). Il Risorgimento è appena concluso e nel 1861 l'unificazione viene fatta, almeno sulla carta, però non è completa, poiché mancano ancora il Veneto e Roma.

I giovani intellettuali e letterati si scontrano con questa difficile realtà e, mentre prima, durante la fase attiva delle lotte risorgimentali, si erano fatti portavoce, <lecturer underlined last four words> ed avevano attivamente operato, ora, con la nuova realtà che gli <corrected by lecturer> si era profilata, si sentivano sconfitti. E' il classico scontro 'ideale-reale', per dirla alla Hegel e, purtroppo, il 'reale' aveva frantumato le loro aspirazioni, e questo per un duplice motivo. Innanzitutto il Risorgimento italiano si era dimostrato un vero fallimento ed in special modo le 'guerre d'Indipendenza' avevano ridimensionato l'Italia che dopo clamorose sconfitte (Lissa e Custoza), ne era uscita a testa bassa. Era una realtà difficile da accettare per tutti, nessuno escluso! Mancava quindi una vera 'gloria' nazionale, cosa che gli altri paesi europei (interessati dai moti risorgimentali) avevano conseguito. Poi, dopo una successiva stabilità, <lecturer underlined parenthetical clause> con l'annessione del Veneto e di Roma (1870), il ministero Crispi tenta la corsa coloniale verso l'Africa, seguendo l'esempio degli altri stati europei, ed anche questo si dimostra un vero fallimento culminante due vergognose sconfitte: Dogali (1887) ed Adua (1896).

L'Italia quindi, uscendo sconfitta, cerca di emergere rispetto agli stati europei ed extra-europei (Stati Uniti e Giappone) e cura le proprie ferite con un programma indirizzato al risanamento dell'economia nazionale nel quale, ovviamente, non c'era spazio per l'arte e la letteratura. Sono anni difficili, poiché il malessere non viene avvertito solo dagli intellettuali ma anche dalle masse popolari. Certo, l'esempio più visibile lo si era avuto in Francia dove, come ci aveva fatto notare il buon Lukács, <lecturer underlined last three words> si era generata la scissione tra terzo e quarto stato. In Italia la situazione è relativamente tranquilla, ma le masse si muovono ed infatti a fine secolo (1892) si forma a Genova il Partito Socialista e a Milano lo 'stato forte' si fa sentire, aiutato da questa borghesia poco progressista e grettamente conservatrice, quando Bava-Beccaris dà ordine di aprire il fuoco (dei cannoni!) nella folla in fermento. E' logico che in un clima del genere i rilevatori più sensibili, cioè gli intellettuali, si facciano sentire. Anche Carducci, in un suo famoso passo, segnala questo diffuso malessere, ma meglio di lui, lo fa

Carlo Dossi, famoso scapigliato che alla nota N. 2521 di Note azzurre (una specie di Zibaldone) dice che la sera camminando lungo i viali di un centro affollato era possibile sentir parlare solamente di borsa e di denaro, mentre le povere arti piangevano solitarie e sprezzate (cosa segnalata anche da Verga nell'introduzione a Eva). # I nostri intellettuali, quelli del secondo ottocento, operano in maniera diversa da quelli del primo. Mentre Manzoni, Berchet, Beccaria, Verri, ed altri, erano stati, in un certo qual modo, i portavoce del Risorgimento e del Romanticismo italiano ed attivamente avevano fatto sentire la loro voce (per dirla alla Lukács avevano 'narrato'), adesso i nuovi intellettuali non lo fanno, o meglio, se lo fanno adottano degli schemi diversi (però, per dirla alla Lukács, non 'descrivono', anzi combattono anche se solo con la penna). La nuova classe intellettuale si sente sconfitta e, per dirla alla Hauser, preferisce l'insuccesso al successo. Si chiudono nella loro torre d'avorio e rifiutano il contatto con il pubblico, poiché, secondo loro, il pubblico e la critica non li possono capire. Effettivamente non potevano essere capiti perché i loro moduli comportamentali erano esattamente l'opposto di quelli della classe dominante (della borghesia).

La Scapigliatura nasce ufficialmente nel 1862 con il sodalizio Praga-Boito e si sviluppa a Milano (centro irradiatore) e in Lombardia principalmente e poi irradiava il suo 'diktat' <lecturer underlined last four words> in altre regioni: Liguria e Piemonte, ad esempio. Il documento ufficiale è: La Scapigliatura e il 6 febbraio di Cletto Arrighi (in realtà Carlo Righetto). Questo movimento si protrae fino alla metà degli anni '70 del secolo, molto attivamente e poi, lentamente, decade. L'ultimo respiro viene esalato dagli scapigliati democratici, però ormai è la fine. La nostra Scapigliatura attinge a piene mani dal Romanticismo tedesco: da Hoffmann, da Heine ed altri. Poi i grossi esempi <lecturer underlined 'grossi'> ci vengono dalla Francia, dove era già maturata, anticipatamente (per ragioni storiche analoghe alle nostre) una cerchia di intellettuali e fra questi si muovevano i parnassiani e i bohemiens o maudits. Il 'diktat' veniva elargito a piene mani da Baudelaire ed il suo Les fleurs du mal e dai vari Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Verlaine, Gautier, de Nerval ed altri. <lecturer underlined from 'diktat'> I nostri scapigliati si organizzano ed essendo coltivatori <underlined by lecturer> di varie attività oltreché quelle letterarie, danno vita a riviste e giornali che avranno però vita breve, come i loro stessi autori. Una delle caratteristiche degli scapigliati era proprio la morte prematura per suicidio, droga o alcool. Ecco allora (come ci fa notare il Finzi), che stramazze in piazza ubriachi come il Praga diventava un segno mortale, oppure: la pistola, per essere sicuri che funziona, bisogna prima provarla contro il muro e poi ci si può sparare con tutta tranquillità, come farà il Camerana

113 (scapigliato che esercitava la professione del
 114 magistrato) che nel 1905 si toglie la vita. Questo loro
 115 rifiuto era troppo visibile, troppo esplicito. Con la
 116 loro produzione hanno indubbiamente lasciato un segno
 117 che, com'è ovvio, è di malessere, forse un po' troppo
 118 marcato. Il Praga, ad esempio, ci ha lasciato delle
 119 stupende poesie dove attacca questo pubblico borghese,
 120 ingrassato ed apatico, ma alla fin fine dopo aver
 121 esaminato l'orgia, la femmina e l'alcool, conscio del
 122 proprio malessere interiore, ricade nel più placido
 123 Romanticismo cantando e cristallizzando <last word
 124 underlined by lecturer> quell'infanzia così romantica che
 125 aveva vissuto. Questi nostri intellettuali sono portatori
 126 di un conflitto interiore, avvertono la coscienza di
 127 'vivere la vita', (non camparla come facevano i
 128 borghesi), ma purtroppo la loro autotrascendenza è
 129 discendente e li porta alla distruzione di se stessi.
 130 Boito è portavoce di questo conflitto interiore e lancia
 131 la tematica del dualismo scapigliato, cioè il dubbio
 132 <lecturer underlined last three words>. Il 'dubbio'
 133 diventa un elemento antropomorfizzato e lacerante che
 134 corrode la vita degli individui. Fra tutti, forse,
 135 Tarchetti è il portavoce della verità, cioè è il più
 136 sensibile alla tematica del 'dubbio' che per lui diventa
 137 lo scontro tra reale e ideale e non è nient'altro che lo
 138 scontro tra vita e morte. Tutto questo il Tarchetti la
 139 lascia capire, ad un attento lettore, sia nei Racconti
 140 fantastici che in Fosca.

141 # Ecco quindi il malessere (il dubbio) esplicitato da
 142 tutti questi letterati che, nella loro realtà, cioè
 143 nella loro torre d'avorio si scambiano messaggi che li
 144 aiutano a sopravvivere.
 145 # Alcuni critici li hanno definiti appendice del
 146 Romanticismo, ma non è giusto etichettarli sotto questo
 147 'cliché'. Certo vivono in un'epoca tardo-romantica,
 148 adottano i temi fumosi <lecturer underlined last word> e
 149 nordici, quasi ossianici del Romanticismo d'oltralpe, ma
 150 però lo colorano d'italiano, anche se attingono da numi
 151 tutelari quali Hoffmann e Poe. Alla fin fine non riescono
 152 a staccarsi dal 'cordone ombelicale' romantico, poiché
 153 alcuni ci ricadono, nelle loro poesie (almeno) sviluppate
 154 per contrasti, ma però <corrected by the lecturer> non
 155 dobbiamo considerarli romantici. Hanno in sé a livello
 156 potenziale caratteristiche romantiche, ma cercano il
 157 nuovo e dobbiamo dargli <corrected by the lecturer>
 158 credito di questo. Secondo i critici più accreditati
 159 vogliono il nuovo, ma addirittura scrivono con un
 160 linguaggio pre-ortossiano <corrected by lecturer> o
 161 manzoniano. Questo può anche essere vero, ma le tematiche
 162 sono nuove, anzi anticipatrici. Infatti, la lacerazione
 163 dell'io è una cosa modernissima. Anticipano Freud e Jung,
 164 con tutta tranquillità, <last three words underlined by
 165 lecturer> e toccano gli stessi argomenti, anche se poi,
 166 questi grossi scienziati (Freud e Jung) ne sviluppano lo
 167 studio con una valenza scientifica.

168 # Le tematiche macabre sono poi all'avanguardia e gli
 169 scapigliati trattano anche con cognizione e serietà temi
 170 parapsicologici che oggi sono al centro degli studi più
 171 accreditati. Secondo la critica, poi, peccano anche nella
 172 carenza di stile <last two words underlined> e questo non
 173 è vero. Infatti fra tutti emerge Luigi Gualdo che a
 174 contatto con i francesi ci lascia una produzione
 175 armoniosa ed estetica. Un posticino nell'album dei
 176 ricordi lo merita anche Dossi, ottimo sperimentalista la
 177 cui lingua risulta un impasto di dialettalismo e
 178 classicismo. <last sentence underlined by lecturer>
 179 # La Scapigliatura non è quindi, in ultima analisi, una
 180 appendice romantica. E' difficile dire che sia poi pre-
 181 Decadentismo, certo è che le tematiche affrontate dagli
 182 scapigliati sono modernissime e vengono toccate anche dai
 183 decadenti. Gli scapigliati anticipano Proust, Musil (che
 184 avverte l'io come un delirio di molti), Pirandello,
 185 D'Annunzio e assorbono come cartine di tornasole
 186 l'esempio francese. L'esempio dei grossi decadenti
 187 francesi: Baudelaire con il suo Les Fleurs du mal e
 188 Huysmans con A ritroso si fa sentire, accanto a quello
 189 degli inglesi: Oscar Wilde con Il ritratto di Dorian Grey
 190 <lecturer underlined from 'Huysmans'> e dell'americano
 191 Poe. Da questi spiriti-guida vengono influenzati un po'
 192 tutti: da Praga a Tarchetti, da Boito a Gualdo.
 193 # La Scapigliatura può essere vista come un pre-
 194 Decadentismo in fase embrionale, perché potenzialmente ne
 195 conserva <underlined by lecturer> tutte le
 196 caratteristiche, però il Decadentismo italiano si
 197 sviluppa in un contesto storico che è diverso e quindi se
 198 proprio di pre-Decadentismo puro non si può parlare, si
 199 può dire almeno che la Scapigliatura è un archetipo di
 200 esso e che però, si è sviluppata in un contesto storico e
 201 sociale tutto suo.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I14 MARK: 21/30 WORDS: 1039
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-
 Decadentismo?
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: Sufficientemente documentato e
 corretto

1 # Dopo il '60, quando l'unità d'Italia era già una realtà
 2 e si andava diffondendo la cultura positivista, si
 3 delineò una nuova corrente letteraria. Tale movimento
 4 venne chiamato 'scapigliatura'. Esso comprendeva un
 5 gruppo di poeti milanesi o che avevano vissuto per un
 6 periodo a Milano <lecturer underlined from 'o'> quali E.
 7 Praga, A. Boito e I. Tarchetti. Il termine '
 8 scapigliatura' fu usato per la prima volta da Cletto
 9 Arrighi, che intitolò un suo romanzo La Scapigliatura e
 10 il 6 febbraio (1862). In tale testo questi personaggi
 11 <last two words underlined by lecturer> vengono descritti
 12 come individui irrequieti, dalla vita travagliata,
 13 'pronti al bene quanto al male'; uomini internamente

14 contrastati da una spiccata conflittualità dovuta alla
 15 differenza esistente tra la loro condizione di vita e il
 16 loro stato sociale; vale a dire tra 'ciò che hanno in
 17 testa e ciò che hanno in tasca'; uomini il cui modo
 18 eccentrico e disordinato di vivere li conduceva a morte
 19 prematura.

20 # Ma perché questo fenomeno si sviluppò proprio a Milano?
 21 # Milano era allora, dal punto di vista economico e
 22 sociale, la città più progredita d'Italia, quella in cui
 23 i vecchi rapporti sociali e le vecchie concezioni del
 24 mondo si andavano dissolvendo più rapidamente, ed il
 25 contrasto tra gli intellettuali sognatori e i borghesi
 26 alla ricerca del solo denaro si faceva più aspro. Milano
 27 era la città dove il vecchio veniva distrutto in nome del
 28 progresso.

29 # In tale contesto nacquero le poesie di protesta del
 30 Praga, come ad esempio Spes unica e La strada ferrata, e
 31 Cose nuove del Boito. In esse emergeva chiaramente
 32 l'opposizione dei poeti verso la distruzione di ciò che
 33 loro consideravano elementi <'loro' 'elementi' underlined
 34 by lecturer> carichi di valori antichi e preziosi. I
 35 segreti di intere famiglie, i valori affettuosi delle
 36 persone che avevano vissuto in quelle case venivano
 37 spazzati dalle ruspe <underlined by lecturer> per far
 38 spazio a moderni edifici o ferrovie. E di tutti questi
 39 ricordi non rimaneva che un cumulo di macerie. Nelle loro
 40 poesie i poeti scapigliati sollevavano un altro problema:
 41 quello del difficile rapporto tra lo scrittore e il
 42 pubblico. Il primo vedeva scomparire lentamente ma
 43 inesorabilmente un passato dove esistevano fermi valori
 44 ai quali fare riferimento; i grandi ideali
 45 risorgimentali, i valori cristiani in cui il bene e il
 46 male si equilibravano e la Provvidenza interveniva come
 47 risolutrice delle tragedie umane avevano infatti
 48 costituito i pilastri morali del primo '800. Pensiamo
 49 alle poesie del Praga Nox e I Re Magi, nelle quali emerge
 50 nettamente il diaframma tra un passato sereno nel quale
 51 valori cristiani ed infanzia andavano di pari passo ed un
 52 presente nel quale esistono solo dubbi e incertezze.
 53 Dall'altra parte lo scrittore si trovava un pubblico di
 54 lettori sempre più numeroso. La qualità delle opere
 55 pubblicate calava notevolmente e le ragioni erano
 56 essenzialmente due. La maggioranza del pubblico
 57 richiedeva ormai letture facili e distensive, socialmente
 58 e politicamente poco impegnate; a ciò si aggiungevano le
 59 scelte degli editori che prediligevano queste
 60 pubblicazioni a larga diffusione per poterne ricavare un
 61 maggior guadagno.

62 # In tale contesto gli scapigliati si trovarono isolati:
 63 le loro opere non venivano apprezzate perché non più
 64 corrispondenti alle esigenze della nuova realtà borghese.
 65 In una tale società essi comparivano come dei 'titani'
 66 portatori di grandi ideali; ma per questi 'eroi
 67 romantici' poco spazio era rimasto: essi vivevano in un
 68 periodo storico ormai cambiato, dove il valore primario
 69 era divenuto il guadagno.

Si delineò così una singolare reazione degli scapigliati: non voler essere più apprezzati perché tale atto avrebbe dimostrato il basso valore delle loro opere; sarebbe stato cioè il sintomo di un loro adeguamento alla realtà borghese. Con un tale atteggiamento di chiusura verso la società essi finirono col rifiutare il progresso, l'avanzante positivismo, la scienza. Questa reazione mise in luce come la Scapigliatura non fu solo un fenomeno letterario o morale, ma anche sociale, poiché testimoniava il disagio dell'intellettuale privo di certezze in una società capitalistica nella quale egli non riuscirà più a riconoscersi.

Anche per ciò che riguarda lo stile, gli scapigliati si dimostrano innovativi, rifiutando schemi ed esempi a loro contemporanei. Si accostarono a compositori <underlined by lecturer> d'oltralpe, ad Heine e ai 'poeti maledetti' francesi - soprattutto a Baudelaire -, che sapevano ben descrivere la seduzione e l'orrore della civiltà industriale. Frequenti erano i riferimenti all'abnorme, al patologico, al rifiuto della <?> borghese e all'esaltazione di un'esistenza bruciata dal vizio e dall'esagerazione. Così facendo gli Scapigliati misero l'accento sulla necessità di una letteratura non più aulica e di una lingua quotidiana. Il loro stile influenzò autori importanti quali il Verga. E' sufficiente pensare alle sue prime opere (Eva e Tigre reale) per riconoscervi l'influsso dell'ambiente culturale milanese.

Un'altra tematica carica di sviluppi futuri fu quella del cosiddetto 'dualismo'. Tale termine, titolo di una poesia di A. Boito, alludeva proprio alla bipartizione del poeta che sente diverse voci compresenti e contrastanti dentro di sé. Tale uomo scomposto in due parti antitetiche è incapace di trovare un suo equilibrio, una sua precisa funzione nella società. Questa suddivisione prelude alla divisione psicanalitica dell'io e dell'ego freudiano del conscio e dell'inconscio, ed arriva fino alla letteratura del primo '900 con Pirandello, D'Annunzio, Musil e Proust. L'opera degli scapigliati fu quindi significativa, soprattutto per la rivolta contro l'artificioso sentimentalismo borghese di inizio '800 e per la denuncia della crisi della letteratura etico-patriottica. Secondo gli scapigliati, infatti, quel patriottismo risorgimentale si era rivelato alla fine funzionale solo alla borghesia, più che alla società nel suo insieme.

Essi avvertirono anche l'accademismo della nostra tradizione letteraria, ma il loro fu solo un movimento incapace di incidere profondamente nella società d'allora, ormai improntata ad un certo stile di vita produttivo, sia per la loro percezione dissociata del mondo e della vita, che si frantumava in vicende e passioni individuali.

La Scapigliatura si trovò sostanzialmente a cavallo tra un vecchio mondo 'pre-borghese', dove la borghesia era in continuo fermento e rivolta contro le istituzioni e la

126 cultura dell' 'ancien régime', e un mondo nuovo,
 127 sconosciuto, dove la borghesia - divenuta ormai classe
 128 sociale - mirava a consolidare le posizioni politiche e
 129 sociali raggiunte, assumendo talvolta anche atteggiamenti
 130 reazionari.
 131 # Il movimento degli scapigliati fu perciò espressione di
 132 un periodo di grande evoluzione sociale e, proprio per
 133 questo fu un movimento che riflesse sia elementi dell'età
 134 immediatamente precedente, quella romantica, sia dell'età
 135 che si presentava alle porte, quella decadente.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I15 MARK: 25 WORDS: 1618
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-
 decadentismo?
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: Svolgimento ricco ed informato

1 # Il movimento scapigliato si esprime in un arco di tempo
 2 che va dal 1860 al 1870. Il termine è coniato da Cletto
 3 Arrighi che nel suo romanzo La Scapigliatura e il 6
 4 febbraio, dà una definizione di esso riferendosi più che
 5 altro ad un fatto di costume che riflette il nuovo clima
 6 dell'Italia unitaria. Nel nostro paese si verifica ora
 7 ciò che era avvenuto in Europa nel '48, allorché i regimi
 8 borghesi avevano fatto uso degli ideali di libertà per
 9 conservare la neo-raggiunta posizione al potere. Questa
 10 nuova borghesia si lancia in una frenetica corsa alla
 11 ricchezza, perseguendo un unico, autentico valore: il
 12 denaro. La sua mentalità è tutta dominata dal movente
 13 pratico-utilitario, che si esprime in una continua
 14 ricerca di guadagni, profitto e tornaconti.
 15 Parallelamente, quei problemi scottanti che il
 16 Romanticismo aveva coperto col suo velo sentimentale,
 17 divengono ora di portata nazionale: lo squilibrio fra
 18 nord e sud, l'analfabetismo, la profonda miseria delle
 19 masse contadine, confrontate con l'avanzare del processo
 20 di industrializzazione. Gli intellettuali e gli artisti
 21 di questi anni percepiscono tutto ciò, esprimendo il loro
 22 stato d'animo, che è di insoddisfazione disillusione e
 23 intolleranza verso lo stato attuale delle cose. Si
 24 diffonde in loro una volontà di ribellione, di tutto ciò
 25 che [V] canonico e istituzionale, di allontanamento dalla
 26 sfera politico-civile in una sorta di anarchia e
 27 maledettismo tutti 'bohemiens'. I letterati italiani si
 28 rendono infatti conto che il loro ruolo nella società, un
 29 tempo attivo e incisivo, è stato messo in crisi insieme a
 30 quei valori e ideali che lo avevano sostenuto. Ecco
 31 allora il ripiegamento in se stessi alla ricerca di
 32 un'arte personale in opposizione alle etichette e ai
 33 valori istituzionalizzati della nuova borghesia. Il loro
 34 diventa un atteggiamento di non-partecipazione sociale.
 35 Il descrivere, anziché narrare, è espressione di una
 36 volontà di estraniarsi dal contesto sociale, ricercando
 37 piuttosto l'insuccesso e il voluto disprezzo da parte
 38 della mediocre borghesia. Si crea così una letteratura

d'atelier, destinata a pochi intimi ascoltatori. In questa atmosfera di inquietudine e di insoddisfazione, i nostri scapigliati si aprono alle esperienze poetiche francesi, che avevano prodotto almeno due fenomeni di 'bohemiens': da Baudelaire a Nerval e Gautier, da Champfleury a Murger. Per quanto riguarda la narrativa, la Scapigliatura si muove in due direzioni principali: da un lato si immerge nella letteratura del '700 e '800, recuperando gli elementi più estremistici del romanticismo; da Dickens a Sterne, alle fantasie macabre e allucinanti di Poe e Hoffmann. Dall'altro lato indugia nella rappresentazione e descrizione della realtà più squallida e minuta, aprendo così le porte all'esperienza verista. Ecco perché, dal punto di vista strettamente letterario, il termine 'Scapigliatura' non è apparso molto efficace nel definire tale movimento, cosicché si è proposta la formula più adeguata di 'secondo Romanticismo lombardo'. Nell'ambito del panorama letterario italiano, gli scapigliati vedono in Alessandro Manzoni un punto ineludibile, oggetto di attrazione e repulsione, di odio e amore. Il Manzoni aveva incarnato proprio quegli ideali di patriottismo, di rigidità morale e di fede religiosa che gli scapigliati demoliscono con tanto fervore. In contrasto con ciò, essi gli riconoscono la grandezza poetica, rispetto alla quale si sentono notevolmente inferiori e incapaci di offrire alternative altrettanto valide. Del romanticismo italiano, gli scapigliati rifiutano l'elemento <?> e razionale, di cui lo stesso Manzoni era stato l'insigne portavoce, e riprendono invece i motivi dell'inconscio e dell'irrazionale tipici dei romanticismi inglese e francese. Il campo d'azione scapigliato si muove al di sopra e al di sotto della piatta linea instaurata dalla cultura borghese: da un lato nella sublimazione dell'Assoluto e dell'Ideale, dall'altro nell'esplorazione delle profondità più nascoste dell'istinto umano e della realtà soprannaturale. Gli Scapigliati si riconoscono in questo comune intento di spezzare gli schemi letterari e artistici tradizionali, anche se poi nella realizzazione concreta di tale proposito, emergono soluzioni e risultati differenti. Il dualismo scapigliato, chiaramente definito nei versi di Arrigo Boito, prende due strade completamente opposte: da una parte, infatti, esso si manifesta su una linea puramente estetica, in un gioco di antitesi parallelismi e opposizioni. I versi del Boito, che esprimono il conflitto fra termini opposti quali 'angelo' e 'demone', 'farfalla' e 'verme', non presuppongono un coinvolgimento psicologico dell'autore. Ciò che a lui interessa veramente è la struttura formale. Egli è il primo a proporre in Italia il concetto di 'arte per arte', che sfocierà in seguito nel movimento francese dei parnassiani. L'arte e la bellezza vengono mitizzate, così come avvolti da un alone di mito e di favola sono i luoghi verso cui si fugge, lontano dall'aridità del nulla e della morte. Sulla stessa scia inaugurata dal Boito, si pone Carlo Dossi, che attua una violenta deformazione del

segno linguistico, dando vita a un linguaggio del tutto
 artificiale, misto di classicismi e di espressioni
 dialettali. Per Dossi, l'essere scapigliato ha come
 significato proprio la costruzione di un linguaggio che
 esprima in modo immediato il sentimento di ribellione
 alla realtà presente. Non vi è in lui alcun tentativo di
 fuga dalla realtà, né di trasformazione della stessa, ma
 soltanto un attacco violento e disgregatore, per mezzo
 di espressionismi, delle strutture conservatrici
 borghesi. Su un versante completamente opposto, abbiamo
 l'esempio di Emilio Praga in cui la spaccatura fra i due
 estremi scapigliati è percepita in modo autentico e
 sofferto. Egli la esprime essenzialmente nel contrasto
 fra la nostalgia dell'età infantile, colma di affetto e
 sicurezza familiare, e l'amara consapevolezza della
 degradazione attuale. In Praga, temi sublimanti quali la
 campagna e il presbiterio, si scontrano brutalmente con
 gli elementi dell'abbietta realtà presente, come l'orgia,
 il vizio e la corruzione. Il realismo aspro, violento,
 anticlericale, beffardo e blasfemo, tipico del Praga
 iniziale, perde consistenza poi nel ricordo nostalgico di
 un'infanzia innocente e di quei riti religiosi ad essa
 legati. Nei suoi componimenti appaiono figure tipiche di
 un mondo ideale, simboli di un candore e un'innocenza che
 il peccato e la corruzione hanno soffocato da tempo. La
 nonna, il buon curato di campagna, i mitici Re Magi, la
 stessa madre tornano alla memoria avvolti da un alone di
 magia. Al Praga non rimane altro che l'amara
 constatazione che quei giorni sono ormai lontani e non
 più recuperabili. Il presente è invece offuscato dalla
 nebbia dell'ateismo, della sfiducia e del dubbio. Il
 dualismo del Praga si manifesta in maniera altrettanto
 contraddittoria nel giudizio su A. Manzoni. Lo scrittore
 Lombardo è attaccato violentemente in *Preludio*, dove
 addirittura ne è auspicata la morte, e rievocato
 teneramente nel successivo componimento, *Manzoni*, dove il
 "casto" poeta è invocato ad illuminare con la sua fede e
 la sua virtù i poveri reietti scapigliati. In Praga, come
 del resto in tutti gli scapigliati, vi è l'intento di
 mescolare arte e letteratura, in una convergenza di
 entrambe, che è fra le caratteristiche più originali del
 movimento scapigliato. Nel caso specifico del Praga vi è
 l'inmissione dell'elemento pittorico, con un'attenzione
 coloristica e una sensibilità cromatica tutte
 impressionistiche. Sullo stesso piano di sofferenza e
 lacerazione interiore, anche se in chiave ancora più
 estreme e patologica, si pone Iginio Tarchetti. Il suo
 dualismo si propone romanticamente nel contrasto fra
 reale e ideale, dove il reale è rappresentato dalla vita
 nella sua normalità e l'ideale, dove il reale è
 rappresentato dalla vita nella sua normalità e l'ideale
 dall'attrazione per una sfera "altra" e opposta, vale a
 dire la morte. L'opposizione vita/morte è in sostanza il
 cardine dell'esperienza tarchettiana. Il Tarchetti
 mostra, infatti, di interessarsi a tutte le espressioni
 di una vita al di fuori dalle normali dimensioni spazio-

151 temporali, alla teoria di una doppia esistenza, di una
 152 vita vissuta interiormente e ai fenomeni paranormali in
 153 genere. Il suo frenetico sperimentalismo è la conferma
 154 della necessità di alternative alla soffocante realtà
 155 borghese: da una parte l'amara problematica sociale in
 156 Paduna, dall'altra i racconti umoristici le storie
 157 fantastiche, i romantici Canti del Cuore. Tutto questo
 158 mostra l'irrisolutezza e la sete d'esperienza
 159 dell'autore. Tarchetti mostra una notevole capacità di
 160 assorbire le tematiche e le polemiche che si dibattevano
 161 in quel periodo: la requisitoria antimilitarista di Una
 162 nobile follia e la difesa delle classi povere in Paduna
 163 ne sono l'esempio più illustre, anche se poi la sua
 164 denuncia non offre pratiche indicazioni, né soluzioni per
 165 un miglioramento della società. Una nobile follia
 166 rappresenta il punto di convergenza di tutti i temi
 167 fondamentali dello spirito tarchettiano: dalla
 168 requisitoria sociale, all'aspra polemica contro tutte le
 169 forme che tolgono la libertà all'individuo; dal
 170 risentimento contro le monarchie all'analisi clinica
 171 delle forme patologiche e parassitiche dell'uomo. Tali
 172 elementi rappresentano un'originale innovazione che
 173 consiste nel rompere i tradizionali schemi narrativi. In
 174 Tarchetti vi è infatti il totale disinteresse per la
 175 narrazione intesa come intreccio e sviluppo di fatti.
 176 Stile e linguaggio sono subordinati alla registrazione di
 177 stati d'animo patologici e all'individuazione di un mondo
 178 soprannaturale. Ugualmente, i personaggi dei suoi
 179 racconti non sono gli autori delle vicende in cui si
 180 trovano coinvolti, ma la loro esistenza è funzione ed
 181 espressione di un particolare stato morboso. In ognuna
 182 delle sue opere, dai Racconti fantastici, ai romanzi,
 183 Tarchetti fa trionfare tutti quegli elementi che possano
 184 esprimere l'abnormità e la loro appartenenza alla
 185 dimensione dell'inconscio e dell'irrazionale. La
 186 Scapigliatura si muove dunque su diversi fronti, spesso
 187 opposti e contrastanti. Da un lato fa suo un patrimonio
 188 letterario d'oltralpe che aveva avuto la migliore
 189 espressione più di un secolo prima in Francia <the
 190 lecturer underlined it as incorrect> Inghilterra e
 191 Germania. D'altro canto il ripiegamento su se stessi,
 192 l'autoemarginazione, e il dar voce ad un mondo interiore
 193 sofferto e lacerato, preparano la strada a quella che
 194 sarà l'esperienza, più fortunata, dei decadenti italiani.
 195 Il comune intento scapigliato è stato quello di
 196 sgretolare le strutture della nuova realtà borghese, ma
 197 gli stessi scapigliati non sono riusciti a proporre una
 198 realtà sostitutiva che corrispondesse in concreto alle
 199 loro aspirazioni. Essi sono rimasti impantanati nelle
 200 sabbie mobili della loro dialettica d'opposizione,
 201 cosicché sono stati presto sommersi dall'ideologia
 202 dominante, incarnata nel classicismo del Carducci.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I16 MARK: 23 WORDS:997
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo?
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: <?> con discreta sicurezza e proprietà

1 # Negli anni immediatamente successivi al 1860, si ha in
 2 Italia un vuoto di ideali, causato dal modo in cui è
 3 andato concludendosi il Risorgimento: l'unità è stata
 4 ottenuta in maniera non del tutto onorevole, dopo
 5 sconfitte e a seguito di trattati, i quali hanno deluso
 6 le speranze di quanti hanno combattuto con le armi e dei
 7 letterati, che hanno preso parte al Romanticismo,
 8 impegnandosi attivamente.
 9 # Ora essi rinunciano a combattere, abbandonano il ruolo
 10 di poeta-vate che li aveva accompagnati nei decenni
 11 precedenti. Rinunciano alla lotta all'interno di una
 12 società che è dominata dalla borghesia, dall'interesse
 13 per il denaro, che è subentrato a quello per l'arte.
 14 Ormai i letterati si rendono conto di star vivendo in
 15 un'epoca in cui si crede in valori ben diversi da quelli
 16 proposti dal Romanticismo. Amore, arte, religione non
 17 trovano più spazio nell'Italia borghese, nella quale
 18 imperano le banche, nella quale la classe sociale al
 19 potere, assillata da tanti problemi, quando si avvicina
 20 alla letteratura vuole trovarvi divertimento, svago e non
 21 altri motivi di preoccupazioni. Gli editori, mossi
 22 dall'interesse economico, pubblicano le opere pensando
 23 solo al guadagno e non alla qualità delle stesse. Si ha
 24 dunque una decadenza dell'arte, che non interessa più il
 25 pubblico, volto verso altre direzioni, verso
 26 soddisfazioni più materiali.
 27 # C'è un vuoto di ideali di fronte al quale il letterato
 28 reagisce isolandosi, uscendo dalla società per
 29 rinchiudersi in una torre d'avorio, lasciando la corona
 30 d'alloro a qualche oscuro poeta ancora interessato ad
 31 essa (Carducci, D'Annunzio). <the lecturer underlined
 32 from 'oscuro' to the end>
 33 # I primi ad accorgersi di questa situazione, del venir
 34 meno del ruolo pubblico dello scrittore nel nostro Paese,
 35 sono gli scapigliati, un gruppo di giovani letterati
 36 dalla vita più o meno simile, dediti all'alcool e ad
 37 altre dissolutezze che vivono ai margini di una società
 38 che non li capisce e che essi disprezzano. Sono dei
 39 'maledetti, degli spregiatori del mondo che li circonda e
 40 del passato di cui rifiutano, o per lo meno cercano di
 41 rifiutare, i valori. Ma il loro atteggiamento nei
 42 confronti del Romanticismo è, spesso, assai ambiguo. Se
 43 da un lato essi non credono più nella religione, che
 44 tanta importanza ha avuto nell'opera del Manzoni,
 45 dall'altro, a volte recuperano il tema religioso in
 46 termini positivi, nostalgici, associandolo a quello
 47 dell'infanzia, caro di una certa parte della
 48 Scapigliatura.

Il Praga, nelle poesie Un frate, Ritratti antichi, Absoluzione, Seraphina, L'inno di Pio IX, è decisamente antireligioso e mostra il suo lato più polemico, deridendo i riti stessi della cristianità, facendo blasfemamente salire in cielo una prostituta morta. Ma nelle liriche quali I Re Magi, A Mia Madre, Nox egli ripensa idillicamente alla propria infanzia come ad un periodo felice, sereno, in cui ancora non conosceva il dubbio ed era in pace con se stesso. A ciò è associato il motivo dell'educazione religiosa: il poeta si rivede bambino, in chiesa, mentre ascoltava la predica, osservato dalla madre. Il Praga sembra rimpiangere l'infanzia innocente, contrapposta alla sua vita presente, troppo brutta per essere raccontata.

Accanto a queste cadute di sapore tardo-romantico, notiamo ~~un-comportamento-altrettanto-ambiguo, dualistico degli-~~negli scapigliati ~~nei-confronti~~ certe caratteristiche che li potrebbero avvicinare al Decadentismo. Essi, come tanti eroi della successiva letteratura decadente, sono interessati a tutti gli aspetti dell'arte: il Praga esordisce come pittore ed anche parecchi suoi compagni si dedicano (o si sono dedicati prima di diventare scrittori) a più attività artistiche. Questo atteggiamento non può non avere ripercussioni sui personaggi creati da essi: nel Tarchetti, nella raccolta di tre racconti Amore nell'arte, tutti i protagonisti sono degli artisti (di solito musicisti), così ~~pare~~ come nel romanzo Una nobile follia, in cui l'autore addirittura recupera il concetto romantico dell'arte impegnata, scostandosi dagli altri scapigliati, che non credono più nell'impegno sociale. Ma se il protagonista del romanzo, lo pseudo-Vincenzo D., crede ancora negli ideali romantici di amore, religione, arte, lo stesso intreccio del romanzo smentisce questa sua presa di posizione, avendo un epilogo 'decadente': lo pseudo-Vincenzo D., titano romantico, deve lottare contro una società materialista, ma lo scontro è impari; egli è sconfitto e pone fine alla sua vita con il suicidio, rinunciando ai propri ideali che, svuotati di ogni contenuto, ricadono su di sé.

Il continuo intrecciarsi di temi romantici e decadenti si trova anche in Nox, dove il Praga associa tre motivi: infanzia, religione cristiana e decadenza, sottolineando ancora una volta la difficoltà degli scapigliati di prendere una precisa posizione ~~contro~~ all'interno della letteratura italiana. Del resto, è proprio una delle caratteristiche più importanti di questi scrittori l'essere divisi tra due differenti visioni della vita [//] e il dualismo si rifrange nelle loro opere (una poesia del Boito si intitola Dualismo).

Questa divisione dell'io è una delle componenti di maggiore modernità della Scapigliatura e si ritrova, poi, nella letteratura novecentesca: il personaggio novecentesco è un diviso, è sgretolato al proprio interno, è doppio. Il tema del doppio ritorna un po' dovunque negli scapigliati e in particolar modo nel

105 Tarchetti. Il Una nobile follia i due protagonisti hanno
 106 lo stesso nome e lo pseudo-Vincenzo D. In Tosca Giorgio
 107 ama due donne e, mentre si trova con Tosca, è forte in
 108 lui l'illusione di essere assieme a Clara, a causa della
 109 rete di somiglianze che egli tesse tra le due donne.
 110 # Il doppio in letteratura si esaurisce con la
 111 Scapigliatura, ma continua ripreso, ad esempio da
 112 scrittori come il D'Annunzio ne Il Piacere, ove egli ama
 113 due donne, Elena Muti e Maria Ferres ed a volte le
 114 confonde; oppure come Oscar Wilde in Il Ritratto di
 115 Dorian Gray, in cui il doppio è rappresentato da un
 116 quadro, che è la coscienza morale del protagonista.
 117 # Dunque la Scapigliatura è continuamente in bilico tra
 118 passato e futuro, tra valori romantici, di cui non riesce
 119 mai completamente a liberarsi e predecadenti, assorbita
 120 da entrambi, in una posizione che da qualcuno è stata
 121 definita come una mancanza di coraggio <the lecturer
 122 underlined from 'una mancanza'> intellettuale,
 123 un'incapacità di decisione, ma che probabilmente, è
 124 l'unica possibile nel periodo in cui gli scapigliati
 125 vivono.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I17 MARK : 22 WORDS:931

SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE

TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo?

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Mostra una discreta padronanza delle problematiche scapigliate

1 # Il termine Scapigliatura venne usato per la prima volta
 2 nel '500 ed indicava un tipo di vita sfrenata, dissoluta
 3 e senza regole di alcun genere. Venne ripresa da Cletto
 4 Arrighi in un suo romanzo, pubblicato nel 1862, La
 5 Scapigliatura e il 6 febbraio. Proprio tra il 1860 e il
 6 1870, sorse a Milano un gruppo di artisti, letterati e
 7 pittori alla ricerca di novità e in polemica contro ogni
 8 forma di tradizione culturale, civile e morale. Questi
 9 ebbero il merito di proporre un nuovo modo di intendere
 10 l'arte e la vita, nuovi mezzi espressivi ed un vivo
 11 interesse per le letterature europee, soprattutto quella
 12 francese e inglese.
 13 # Il termine scapigliato traduce il vocabolo francese
 14 'bohème' <the lecturer signals the spelling mistake> e,
 15 secondo l'Arrighi, doveva indicare tutti quegli artisti
 16 che si sentivano accomunati dal medesimo atteggiamento di
 17 rivolta contro la tradizione culturale italiana e la
 18 situazione storica dell'Italia post-risorgimentale.
 19 Infatti, in questo periodo, si riscontrano delle
 20 coordinate unitarie: c'è grande insoddisfazione, disagio
 21 e intolleranza, causate principalmente dall'assenza di
 22 nuovi obiettivi da proporre, e tutto ciò conduce ad una
 23 situazione di vuoto ideale. Questa condizione non è
 24 sentita solo dagli Scapigliati, ma viene illustrata molto
 25 bene anche da vari storici. <lecturer underlined from
 26 'ma' to 'storici'> Chabod, in Storia della politica estera

italiana dal 1870 al 1886, constatò l'assenza di ideali e di una meta verso la quale la nazione potesse tendere. A questo sfondo si aggiungono nuove ragioni di disagio: l'unificazione non si era ancora conclusa e la gloria del nascente stato italiano veniva a mancare sin dall'inizio, poiché, all'epoca, la gloria di una nazione si identificava con la potenza militare, e l'Italia si trovava in una condizione di debolezza rispetto agli altri paesi europei. Anche nell'espansione coloniale in Africa, l'Italia si mobilitò senza successo.

L'intellettualità italiana si accorse, inoltre, che il ruolo del letterato era stato ridefinito. La borghesia e l'industrialismo avevano costituito un nuovo quadro sociologico, seguendo fini pratico-economici, per dare un'ossatura allo stato. Gli artisti, talvolta, non comprendevano questa necessità e, timorosi delle novità introdotte, si rivolgevano al passato attaccandolo, come nella lirica Preludio del Praga, o lodandolo e sognandolo, come nella poesia Manzoni sempre del Praga. # I letterati pre-unitari avevano un ruolo centrale e attivo nella società e una precisa funzione pratico-pubblica. Dopo l'unità questo fine venne a mancare e i letterati stessi, come il Carducci, il Dossi e il Verga, constatarono l'inutilità dell'artista. Anche Baudelaire aveva osservato la stessa situazione in Francia, ma questo cambiamento in Europa si era verificato alcuni decenni prima che in Italia.

Hauser and Auerbach furono testimoni <last two words underlined by the lecturer> del mutamento del lettore borghese. Questa figura di uomo impegnato nell'ambiente pubblico, <last two words underlined by the lecturer> cercava nella lettura un punto di conforto e tranquillità. Veniva spezzato così il rapporto tra il pubblico e l'artista impegnato, che preferiva l'insuccesso, isolandosi, piuttosto che accontentare il gusto mediocre del destinatario.

Alcuni tra gli esponenti più rappresentativi della Scapigliatura, che osservavano la loro diversità rispetto agli autori precedenti e si definivano '...figli di padri ammalati ...', furono Arrigo Boito, Emilio Praga, Roberto Sacchetti e Ugo Tarchetti.

Dualismo, la lirica scritta da Arrigo Boito ed appartenente al Libro dei versi, viene considerato il manifesto <lecturer underlined last word> della Scapigliatura. In questa poesia l'essere umano non è visto come un'unità, ma come un ente bipolare e dissociato. Vengono delineati due aspetti della realtà quello deteriore e quello sublime, ed anche la vita è strutturata fra questi estremi. Il messaggio che ci viene comunicato è costituito da una pars destruens e una pars construens che provocano un contrasto tra reale e ideale e si rivelano nel dissidio tra il satanismo e le aspirazioni angeliche. <last sentence marked by the lecturer as not entirely accurate> L'oscillazione tra il blasfemo e il recupero dei valori cristiani segna tutta l'oper del Praga. Per quello che riguarda il primo

versante si possono ricordare le poesie Un frate, in cui il poeta deride la fede cattolica, immaginando che il frate sia l'incarnazione del demonio; oppure Assoluzione dove si beffa della sacra confessione, offrendosi per assolvere una donna alla quale il parroco aveva rifiutato il perdono. Nel secondo versante, quello idillico e sentimentale, si possono riscontrare dei motivi sempre presenti e in sintonia tra loro: il recupero dei valori religiosi, dell'infanzia ed infine la decadenza della condizione di beatitudine infantile. Nella lirica I Re Magi il Praga maturo riconsidera con positività l'infanzia, in opposizione alla negatività del presente. Anche con i versi di A mia madre il poeta esprime il desiderio di recuperare il passato della religiosità e dell'ingenua fede.

Gli Scapigliati non scrissero solo poesia, ma anche romanzi di notevole importanza per la letteratura italiana della fine dell'800 e del primo '900. Roberto Sacchetti scrisse Entusiasmi e completò l'unica prova narrativa del Praga Memorie del presbiterio. Questo romanzo ha un carattere frammentario ed è articolato per scene, ma questa struttura sconnessa non va considerata in chiave negativa, ma come anticipazione del romanzo di fine secolo.

La figura di Ugo Tarchetti offrì un'ondata di originalità <last five words underlined by lecturer> alla situazione critica del tempo, ed introdusse all'interno del 'Fantastico' <lecturer marks that something is missing> Amava scrivere racconti molto particolari, con elementi insoliti per l'Italia, prendendo spunto da romanzi francesi o inglesi. Tra i suoi scritti, quelli che ebbero maggiore fama, furono Fosca, Una nobile follia, Racconti fantastici e Racconti umoristici.

Non è semplice dare una definizione della Scapigliatura che comprenda tutti gli aspetti artistici che essa anticipò, inoltre questo movimento costituì una fase di transizione tra due generazioni molto diverse.

La stessa tematica dualistica, propria di questo piccolo gruppo, che molti hanno interpretato come una mancanza di coraggio intellettuale, in realtà preannuncia il tema della dissociazione dell'io, tipico dei romanzi degli autori successivi come il D'Annunzio de Il Piacere o il Pirandello del Fu Mattia Pascal.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I18 MARK:22 WORDS: 1476
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo?

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Mostra una discreta informazione, sebbene affronti il tema solo tangenzialmente.

Gli anni tra il 1860 e il 1870 sono quelli in cui si sviluppa la Scapigliatura milanese, epicentro di tutti i movimenti di opposizione artistico-letteraria che si svilupperanno in seguito un po' in tutte le città dell'Italia settentrionale.

La parola 'Scapigliatura', che definirà in seguito un movimento letterario, appariva per la prima volta nel romanzo di Cletto Arrighi intitolato La Scapigliatura e il 6 febbraio. Un dramma di famiglia del 1862.

Con 'Scapigliatura' egli <last word underlined by lecturer> non dava una precisa definizione letteraria, ma si riferiva semplicemente ad un fatto di costume. Arrighi, infatti, la definisce 'personificazione della follia che sta fuori ai manicomi, serbatoio del disordine della imprevidenza, dello spirito di rivolta e di opposizione a tutti gli ordini stabiliti'. Egli distingue, inoltre, due aspetti della Scapigliatura, e precisamente afferma: 'Da un lato: un profilo più italiano che milanese, pieno di brio, di speranza e di amore. (...) Dall'altro lato, invece, un volto smunto, solcato, cadaverico, su cui stanno le impronte delle notti passate nello stravizio e nel gioco, su cui si adombra il segreto d'un dolore infinito.'

Per Arrighi, dunque, la Scapigliatura è essenzialmente una 'casta', una classe che si differenzia dalle altre per l'azione di vari fattori, ne fanno parte gli sradicati, gli anticonformisti, cioè tutti quelli che i benpensanti condannano.

La Scapigliatura è il primo movimento che si sviluppa in Italia dopo il Risorgimento. Finita la spinta propulsiva che aveva portato alla lotta risorgimentale, si nota <lecturer underlined last two words> ora la mancanza di ideali per cui combattere, non ci sono più mete a cui tendere, obiettivi sostitutivi. All'unità territoriale mancano ancora il Veneto e Roma, fatto che determina nella gente <last two words underlined by lecturer> una situazione di scontento e di insoddisfazione. Si avverte anche l'avanzare del 'moderno' e, precisamente, il dominare nelle società della mentalità economico-utilitaria che determina un senso di emarginazione negli intellettuali. Vi è, dunque, un'ansia del tramontato <lecturer underlined from lecturer> senso morale e, nello stesso tempo, una sfiducia verso la nuova realtà costituitasi. Si delinea, in questi anni, il fenomeno del ridimensionamento del ruolo del letterato; infatti, mentre il ruolo del letterato in epoca pre-risorgimentale <last word underlined by lecturer> era attivo ed egli era partecipe alla vita politica e sociale, ora viene meno il mandato

che la società gli aveva affidato in precedenza, scade, per così dire il ruolo del poeta-vate.

Tale fenomeno era già stato avvertito in precedenza, a livello europeo, da Charles Baudelaire, in realtà nella sua poesia Perte d'auréole si sente come il poeta si senta privato del suo ruolo. La poesia <the lecturer underlined as wrong both this word poesia and ruolo> è un dialogo tra un ignoto interlocutore e l'autore, in cui egli spiega che stava attraversando la strada, ma nel farlo egli ha perso l'aureola che è caduta sulla strada, tuttavia dice di non essersi soffermato a raccogliercela per paura di essere travolto dal traffico. Qui l'aureola è una metafora per la funzione del poeta, ora dunque egli è un poeta 'disaureolato' e la sua poesia si fa documento di tale crisi di valori che domina nella società.

Il momento storico decisivo, da quando cioè si avverte il senso del 'moderno', è il 1848, anno delle rivoluzioni europee. Lucacs, teorico marxista del nostro secolo, afferma che il momento determinante è il periodo di giugno e luglio a Parigi, quando si assiste alla battaglia tra la borghesia e il proletariato che terminerà, come sappiamo, con la vittoria borghese. A livello letterario, Lucacs individua due modi diversi di rappresentazione ed, infatti, distingue: da un lato, la tecnica del 'narrare', tipica del periodo del primo ottocento, in cui lo scrittore costruisce favole <the lecturer corrected the Latin spelling of this word> narrative vivaci e testimonia la sua partecipazione attiva alla vita pubblica; dall'altro lato, la tecnica narrativa del 'descrivere', relativa al periodo del secondo ottocento, in cui il narratore si limita a descrivere e a contemplare la realtà dall'esterno, attestando la sua emarginazione dalla società. Inoltre, per Lucacs, la letteratura relativa al secondo ottocento è una letteratura di decadenza, in cui egli non scorge alcun fatto positivo. Anche Hauser, un altro critico, condivide l'idea di Lucacs di distinguere due fasi letterarie nel periodo ottocentesco. Tuttavia egli individua un importante movimento letterario del secondo ottocento e precisamente: <corrected punctuation> il Naturalismo: testimone di una letteratura di opposizione al regime borghese. (~~ehe-si-cala-nella-realtà~~)

Un altro critico, Auerbach, mette in evidenza la rottura del apporto artista-pubblico, cercando di metterne in risalto le probabili cause. Egli identifica il lettore dell'ottocento come un esponente della borghesia affarista che, quando si rivolge alla letteratura, richiede tranquillità e conforto, non percepisce cioè la letteratura problematica che gli viene proposta dagli intellettuali scapigliati. <last word underlined by lecturer> Da qui nasce, quindi, nel letterato il senso di emarginazione e di isolamento dalla società moderna.

Facendo ora riferimento agli scapigliati, Emilio Praga può essere considerato uno dei maggiori esponenti del di tale movimento-scapigliato. Alla sua seconda raccolta di

liriche Penombre, del 1864, appartiene la poesia Spes unica, in cui il poeta osserva la mancanza di comunicazione che c'è tra l'artista e il pubblico borghese, in quanto a quest'ultimo interessano solo i temi di carattere pratico-utilitario e non ciò che si eleva dalla quotidianità, come la poesia.

Si può esaminare, inoltre, un'altra poesia che appartiene sempre alla stessa raccolta, intitolata All'amico, dedicata appunto all'amico Arrigo Boito. La poesia è composta da sei strofe: le prime tre sono rivolte al difficile rapporto esistente tra gli intellettuali e il pubblico che non percepisce <last word underlined by lecturer> le loro opere. Il poeta respinge la critica ed anche l'apprezzamento della poesia da parte del pubblico perché sarebbero indici di scarso valore della sua opera. Le ultime tre strofe sono rivolte, al compagno di visioni e di esperienze che è l'amico Boito, la sola persona che può comprendere la sua poesia. La strofa finale introduce la tematica del 'dualismo' scapigliato. Tale termine è il titolo di una poesia di Boito che appartiene al Libro dei versi del 1877, i cui versi iniziali sono: 'Son luce ed ombra, angelica farfalla e verme immondo; sono un caduto cherubo dannato ad errar nel mondo, (...)'. La contrapposizione dualistica tra 'luce' ed 'ombra', tra 'angelico' e 'demoniaco', tra 'verme' e 'farfalla' determinano <lecturer marked the wrong agreement> una sceneggiatura dell'incertezza. La poesia è una studiata simmetria di contrasti formali e parallelismi.

In Praga, la lacerazione interiore si manifesta nel contrasto tra l'innocenza dell'età perduta dell'infanzia e la presente degradazione causata dal crollo delle certezze. Vi è, dunque, nel poeta una duplice e contrastante tendenza, infatti ci sono poesie in cui prevale il tono anticlericale e blasfemo, ed altre in cui vi è un recupero dell'infanzia legata alla fede religiosa perduta.

A testimonianza di quanto detto, si può esaminare la poesia intitolata Assoluzione, in cui il poeta deride i riti e le pratiche della Chiesa cattolica. Nella poesia A mia madre, scritta negli ultimi mesi di vita, i ricordi infantili emergono intorno alla struggente memoria della figura materna. Egli, infatti, la invita a rievocare l'infanzia del figlio che è legata alle credenze religiose. Tuttavia, il poeta avverte l'impossibilità di cancellare la nebbia che avvolge il suo passato e il definitivo distacco dal perduto paradiso infantile. Inoltre, la contrapposizione religiosa del Praga si può riscontrare ~~anche~~ nelle due poesie rivolte allo stesso personaggio, cioè al Manzoni. Nella poesia Preludio, la prima poesia della raccolta Penombre, il poeta scrive: 'Noi siamo i figli dei padri ammalati', cioè egli vuole mettere in evidenza come i 'figli', a differenza dei 'padri', non possiedono più certezze, valori a cui far riferimento. Qui Manzoni è chiamato in causa in modo offensivo, in quanto rappresentante della letteratura

romantico-risorgimentale. Inoltre, il poeta fa un discorso in chiave anticristiana, in cui Cristo è rimosso definitivamente. L'altra poesia, sempre rivolta a Manzoni, è quella scritta nel giorno in cui quest'ultimo muore. Essa è appunto intitolata Manzoni. Mentre prima Manzoni viene criticato, qui egli viene rievocato tanto da identificarlo con la propria infanzia. Per Praga, e per gli scapigliati in genere, Manzoni è un punto di riferimento verso il quale vi è un rapporto di amore e di odio, di ammirazione e di repulsione. La grandezza poetica del Manzoni mette in evidenza tutte le carenze morali e stilistiche della nuova letteratura del 'dubbio', che non ha saputo surrogare altri ideali. la poesia si conclude con un auspicio che il Manzoni si faccia ispiratore della nuova letteratura.

Concludendo, si può osservare che gli Scapigliati non accettano la nuova realtà costituitasi, tuttavia, pur respingendola, non riescono ad intravedere un altro assetto sociale, vivendo quindi in una sorta di smarrimento spirituale.

La loro poetica, dunque, non nasce tanto dal bisogno di affermare qualcosa di effettivamente nuovo, quanto come critica alla società e alle strutture borghesi.

Dante Isella, infatti, afferma che gli scapigliati apposero solo contenuti 'maledetti' ad altri contenuti 'buoni', non seppero così uscire dalla semplice opposizione di tematiche.

La funzione storica della Scapigliatura è quella di aver preparato il terreno alla esperienza verista, per l'inclinazione di tali narratori alla rappresentazione della realtà, anche se con la presenza di elementi autobiografici e soprannaturali.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I19 MARK: 21 WORDS: 806
 SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE
 TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-
 decadentismo?
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: Sufficiente panoramica sull'argomento

1 # Storicamente il movimento scapigliato comprende un
 2 periodo molto breve del XIX secolo, che va dal 1860 al
 3 1870 circa. Pur nella sua brevità è importantissimo per
 4 la nostra letteratura.
 5 # L'Italia si è appena costituita come nazione, per cui
 6 <lecturer underlined last two words>, la sua situazione
 7 in questo momento, è molto delicata, in quanto si trova a
 8 dover affrontare problemi, soprattutto economici, su
 9 larga scala. Viene così a terminare quel movimento
 10 risorgimentale che aveva sostenuto gli ideali
 11 dell'unificazione nazionale e di Patria, e che per
 12 ottenerli aveva combattuto tenacemente. Accanto a questo,
 13 dobbiamo ricordare il Romanticismo, corrente che esaltò
 14 le stesse idee, ma a livello letterario e a quello di
 15 pensiero. Romanticismo e Risorgimento, dopo
 16 l'unificazione non servono più <last 6 words underlined
 17 by lecturer>, poiché appartengono a un'epoca ormai
 18 passata. La presa di coscienza di questa situazione porta
 19 negli animi soprattutto degli intellettuali, ad avvertire
 20 una sorta di vuoto. Essi sono posti nella situazione di
 21 dover ricercare nuovi credi, sui quali poter costruire la
 22 propria linea di vita. Il circolo culturale <last two
 23 words underlined> degli scapigliati, che ha la sua sede
 24 nel territorio lombardo, è costituito da letterati che
 25 appunto cercano nuovi ideali. Essi vogliono tagliare i
 26 ponti con la letteratura passata, che possiamo dire
 27 iniziava con il Petrarca. Questa era ormai diventata una
 28 tradizione, nel senso che era quasi d'obbligo rispettare
 29 certi canoni stilistici e tematici. In questo modo gli
 30 scrittori e i poeti, nello scrivere, non seguivano più i
 31 movimenti dei loro animi e il loro modo di esprimersi
 32 <lecturer underlined last 5 words>, ma appunto
 33 ricalcavano questa tradizione letteraria. Gli scapigliati
 34 si trovano a combattere contro il passato, ma anche
 35 contro il presente che non gli aiuta <lecturer underlined
 36 'gli' as a grammar mistake> nella loro ricerca.
 37 # Arrigo Boito, uno dei maggiori rappresentanti del
 38 movimento, in Case nuove ci parla della Milano
 39 ricostruita, dei nuovi edifici che sono brutti,
 40 insignificanti poiché mancano di una loro storia e
 41 quindi gli uomini non sono legati ad essi da alcun
 42 affetto. Continua poi dicendo che gli artisti hanno perso
 43 il loro ruolo nella società. Questa poesia è interessante
 44 perché ci chiarisce due aspetti tipici del movimento: il
 45 primo è il loro <last word underlined by the lecturer>
 46 astio nei confronti della borghesia, la quale rappresenta
 47 <last word underlined by the lecturer> lo sviluppo
 48 industriale crescente; il secondo è la perdita

dell'artista <last word underlined by the lecturer>, in particolare del poeta, della propria posizione nella società. Ossia ~~il-poeta~~ l'arte sembra essere diventata un qualcosa di superfluo e il poeta si vede spogliato di quella missione che aveva avuto nel periodo risorgimentale. Oltre a questo tutti gli artisti si trovano nella condizione di non aver nulla a cui ispirarsi, dal momento che la natura e gli antichi edifici vengono distrutti per lasciare spazio alle nuove invenzioni tecnologiche. Gli scapigliati non riescono praticamente a lottare contro il nuovo, e per questo si rinchiudono, si rifugiano nel loro piccolo gruppo, e solo qui riescono a realizzarsi. Questo è un atteggiamento tipicamente decadente, come il voler essere considerati poeti del genere 'maudit'. Cercano d'esserlo, conducendo una vita tra droga e alcool, e di mostrarlo nelle loro opere attraverso rappresentazioni non solamente brutte, ma macabre, orride. Ricordiamo Memento del Tarchetti, dove piacevoli e belle descrizioni del viso della donna si alternano <last word underlined by the lecturer> a quelle macabre. In varie opere <last word underlined>: Seraphina, del Praga, in Tigre reale, del Verga pre-verista e in molte altre <last two words underlined by the lecturer> c'è la descrizione di un amplesso che ormai odora di <last 4 words underlined by the lecturer> tifo o di un abbraccio con persone ormai logorate dal male e diventate scheletri. In questo modo essi manifestano il loro senso di solitudine ~~di-incomprensione~~ e il loro desiderio di morte. <the following has been added with at the end, but it has been inserted here> *(Vengono influenzati dalle opere degli stranieri, in particolar modo da quelle di Baudelaire, che circolano in Italia in questo periodo. Dobbiamo comunque dire che essi non riescono a raggiungere lo stesso 'maledettismo' del poeta francese.)*

Accanto a questo atteggiamento ne troviamo un altro e cioè quello di voler recuperare il passato; contemporaneamente lo rifiutano e lo recuperano. Vorrebbero rivivere quel periodo trascorso, che coincide con la loro infanzia, in quanto è stato pieno di affetti, di valori, soprattutto religiosi. Richiamano alla memoria quel tempo in un modo idillico-costalgico. I Re Magi del Praga ne è un esempio, come lo è Manzoni, sempre dello stesso autore. In quest'ultima <the lecturer signals that something is missing> il poeta fa rivivere la sua infanzia, esaltando la figura del grande romanziere romantico. Penso che non si possa definire la Scapigliatura solamente come una appendice romantica o come un movimento pre-decadente, questo a causa dell' ~~loro~~ atteggiamento dualistico che ebbero i suoi componenti, mostratoci nelle loro opere; e per quella loro incapacità di scegliere e quindi l'essere sempre in bilico tra due cose opposte. <the lecturer underlined the article of 'l'essere' and 'cose'> Si può parlare di esso come di un 'filone' romantico del tipo irrazionale, in quanto ha cercato di far emergere, di far uscire quella

105 componente illogica, che è presente negli uomini, e che
 106 il Romanticismo aveva escluso. In questo modo ha
 107 preparato il terreno adatto al Decadentismo, sia a
 108 livello formale (nel gusto di cercare le parole, gli
 109 aggettivi più adatti per esempio) che a quello tematico.

ITALIAN SCRIPT: I20

MARK: 23

WORDS: 852

SECOND YEAR WRITTEN EXAM - JUNE 1990 - UDINE

TITLE: La Scapigliatura: appendice romantica o pre-decadentismo?

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Conosce la materia e si esprime con garbo.

1 # In Italia, il processo di industrializzazione avviato
 2 grazie alle innovazioni tecnologiche introdotte nel
 3 settore agricolo e industriale, suscitò diverse reazioni,
 4 non sempre positive e favorevoli. Ci fu, infatti, un
 5 gruppo di intellettuali, per lo più milanesi o viventi a
 6 Milano - Milano era, negli anni '60, la città più
 7 progredita dal punto di vista sociale ed industriale -
 8 che si oppose violentemente al nuovo sistema, accusandolo
 9 di distruggere i vecchi valori e di allontanare l'uomo
 10 dalle certezze che lo avevano sostenuto fino a quel
 11 momento. Questa corrente prese il nome di Scapigliatura,
 12 dal romanzo La Scapigliatura e il 6 febbraio. Un dramma
 13 di famiglia di Cletto Arrighi (anagramma di Carlo
 14 Rughetti), che definì così quella 'certa categoria di
 15 individui di ambo i sessi, tra i 20 e i 35 anni, non più,
 16 pieni d'ingegno quasi sempre pronti al bene quanto al
 17 male ... travagliati, turbolenti.' 'Questa casta o
 18 classe', scrive sempre l'Arrighi, 'vero pandemonio del
 19 secolo, personificazione della follia che sta fuori dai
 20 manicomi, serbatoio del disordine, dell'imprevidenza,
 21 dello spirito di rivolta e di opposizione a tutti gli
 22 ordini stabiliti, io l'ho chiamata appunto la
 23 Scapigliatura.'
 24 # Lo scapigliato esagera tutte le premesse del
 25 Romanticismo, pur condividendone l'irrazionalismo, e lo
 26 spirito antiborghese. All'idea di libertà sostituisce
 27 quella di licenza sfrenata, soprattutto nella scelta e
 28 nella trattazione delle tematiche: la malattia, la
 29 sofferenza fisica e psichica, lo sfacelo del corpo, la
 30 morte, ricorrono spesso nelle opere scapigliate. Alla
 31 nobiltà delle passioni sostituisce la spregiudicatezza
 32 del vizio come segno di distinzione e un gusto quasi
 33 ossessivo per l'orrido, per il macabro e per il turpe,
 34 che nelle opere si traduce con <preposition underlined by
 35 lecturer> l'introduzione di un elemento abnorme e
 36 trasgressivo che convoglia il lettore nella dimensione
 37 dell'assurdo. Anche il linguaggio si conforma alla natura
 38 delle tematiche e diventa violento, volgare, a volta
 39 addirittura blasfemo. Siamo lontani dal tono solenne ed
 40 elevato che troviamo in Ode a un'urna greca di Keats <the
 41 lecturer indicated this comparison is not suitable> o ai
 42 paesaggi naturali di William Wordsworth. E' un linguaggio

che subisce gli influssi di Baudelaire, Hoffmann, Poe, un
 linguaggio crudo e violento che vuole colpire il
 formalismo e il convenzionalismo borghese.
 #? Il tema della morte, sublimato nella letteratura
 romantica, con la Scapigliatura si spoglia di tutte le
 connotazioni mistiche e spirituali fino a sfociare, come
 nel caso d <unfinished line: the student made a
 correction, but forgot to complete it, the lecturer put a
 question mark near it> in vera e propria necrofilia, con
 lo scopo di attaccare tutte le inibizioni e le formalità
 dell'amore borghese. All'amore si accosta la morte, alla
 ragione si contrappone l'irrazionalità, alla realtà
 l'illusione. E' la tipica struttura bipolare della
 letteratura scapigliata, realizzata mediante
 l'accostamento di due aspetti contrastanti della realtà,
 che svela tutte le incertezze e le contraddizioni di
 questi letterati, sempre in bilico tra l'accettazione di
 un mondo degradato e la ricerca di nuove forme di vita
 per lo spirito. Nelle loro opere troviamo 'la luce' ma
 anche 'l'ombra', troviamo il 'bruco' e la 'farfalla', la
 vita e la morte, la realtà e l'illusione; vengono
 duramente attaccati i valori religiosi, si utilizzano
 termini irriverenti nei confronti degli uomini della
 Chiesa e successivamente questi stessi valori vengono
 nostalgicamente recuperati ed esaltati. Ci troviamo di
 fronte ad un 'io' diviso, combattuto, frammentato, che ha
 perduto la propria integrità psicologica. E' 'l'uomo
 della folla' di Allan Poe, Vitangelo Moscarda di Uno,
nessuno, centomila, l'uomo moderno, schiacciato
 dall'oscillare ossessivo del pendolo del tempo, della
 morte, avvolto nel mistero, in lotta disperata per
 rimanere a galla in una realtà corrotta e degradata che
 non offre più certezze, ma solo punti interrogativi. Gli
 scapigliati cercano di reagire a tutto ciò non solo per
 mezzo della loro poetica e si distinsero dal borghese
 anche nel modo di vestire, nel taglio di capelli, nella
 forma della barba (capelli lunghi, barbe incolte),
 nell'andatura dinoccolata. <last remark underlined by the
 lecturer> La loro serietà morale gli <lecturer underlined
 pronoun as wrong> consenti di tenere fede ai loro
 principi fino in fondo e non solo <lecturer underlined
 conjunction 'e'> poetarono ma anche vissero da
 'scapigliati', rinnegando la loro classe sociale di
 provenienza e relegandosi ai margini della società.
 Giuseppe Rovani morì di consunzione in miseria
 all'ospedale, Giovanni Camerana si suicidò, Tarchetti si
 spese a ventotto anni <lecturer underlined number> su un
 divano, a casa di un amico, Emilio Praga morì giovane per
 vita sregolata. Essi furono i miti morali e materiali di
 un progresso frenetico ed alienante, testimoni del
 disagio dell'intellettuale in una società capitalista
 ostile a qualsiasi fenomeno d'arte pura e spontanea.
 Colsero la natura tecnica del mondo che si andava
 profilando e vi si ribellarono violentemente ma,
 nonostante i loro sforzi per cambiare le cose, furono
 vittime di una trasformazione strutturale di cui seppero

99 cogliere solo gli aspetti negativi. Per questo motivo la
100 Scapigliatura può essere considerata come il primo
101 precursore <lecturer underlined last 3 words> di quel
102 fenomeno che qualche decennio più avanti sarebbe andato
103 sotto il nome di Avanguardia. E' un'importante corrente
104 letteraria di transizione, che fu a cavallo tra le ultime
105 manifestazioni della tradizione romantica e le prime
106 forme di decadentismo, espressione delle ansie e delle
107 incertezze dell'uomo moderno trattate con
108 l'irrazionalismo proprio della letteratura romantica.
109 <last 5 words underlined by the lecturer> Ma
110 contrariamente allo scrittore romantico, che si rifugiava
111 tra la natura <preposition 'tra' underlined by lecturer>
112 per sfuggire alla confusione del mondo cittadino, lo
113 scapigliato non riuscì a trovare delle alternative valide
114 al sistema borghese che attaccava e <conjunction 'e'
115 underlined by the lecturer> la sua protesta non sfociò in
116 nulla di concreto.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E1 MARK: 67% WORDS:682
 ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH
 TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.

The history of literature most certainly involves an endless shifting and changing of literary form. To see this change as a 'progress' from 'primitive' to 'sophisticated' is misguided for two reasons. First of all, it makes the arrogant assumption that literature is moving in one direction towards a particular goal, that of representing the world, while the world and its values remain the same. Secondly, it ignores the fact that much of our most contemporary western literature is looking back to the very oldest forms of literature for inspiration and device.

In Aspects of the Novel, E.M. Forster characterised the earliest audiences of literature as 'shock headed savages' interested only in story, what happens next, and lurid event. But surely the Odyssey, and Iliad of Homer and Virgil's Aeneid, are more than a series of 'and thens'? In fact, these works are highly developed in their attitudes particularly to time, with narratives which switch back and forth in the way that modern films, for example, use flashback. And if the desire for 'story' is primitive and savage, we cannot have progressed very far if the popularity of yarn-spinners such as Jeffrey Archer and Jackie Collins is a reliable indicator of contemporary taste.

What is often meant by 'sophisticated' is often, I believe 'realistic'. Charlotte Brontë seems to represent reality in a way which earlier literature does not. This seems to be, also, a difficult trick to achieve, adding to the 'sophistication' of works such as Middlemarch and Jane Eyre. But is not the faith which the omniscient narrator of Victorian novels asks of us rather primitive in fact? The belief that one person can know all that is going on, has access to 'truth', which he can eke out to the reader, is a misguided one. It is this omniscience and authority that John Fowles so successfully questions in The French Lieutenant's Woman. In chapter 13, for example, he admits that he does not know what Sarah Woodruff is thinking as she looks out to sea at night, and he has no intention of following her into the garden, where she is keeping her vigil. He even draws attention to the untruth of the novel by providing two endings, giving the reader an ultimate authority. Many readers, accustomed to the 'sophistication' of the Victorian realist novel, find such formal complexity irritating.

In drama, too, the move has been from the ritualised forms of Aeschylus' Oresteia, for example, to a more psychologically realistic approach. Euripides' Medea, for example, concentrates much more on individual motives and feelings than earlier Greek drama - we cannot help but sympathise with the woman who murders her children. In reading Euripides, it is easy, too, to see how the later Greek dramatists influenced the renaissance humanist approach of Shakespearean tragedy and comedy. People on the stage, it seems, become more and more like ourselves. By the beginning

of the twentieth century dramatic realism was so entrenched that until the last thirty years, complicated living room 'sets' and french windows actually served to draw attention away from the language and characters. A very interesting current production of Lady Windermere's Fan, in Glasgow, does away with authentic costume and set and recaptures the comedy, as well as the wit, of Wilde's text. There is a move back to the use of Greek and Roman tradition in contemporary drama. Timberlake Wertenbaker's play The Love of the Nightingale, takes its story from Ovid, and achieves a new feminist interpretation of a tragic tale, using the chorus as an often comic commenting device.

This contemporary interest in imaginative play with older texts, is possible as a result of the Modernist movement. Once literature can abandon its pretence of representing reality, it can sport imaginatively - and it is no coincidence that magic is such an important aspect of the work of novelists such as Rushdie and Primo Levi. We have moved, it seems, back, to sit with the shock headed savages, but in doing so, we are no longer fooling ourselves about the abilities of language, or the authority of the individual voice.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E2

MARK:54

WORDS:708

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Very thin stuff

I think it is unfair to say that in the history of literature there has been a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms. Today we are much freer in our writing. If told to write a poem I might write an 800 page epic or an 8 [5] line haiku: both poems might contain as much wealth in knowledge and the haiku would probably take longer to write in condensing the essential idea. We cannot judge a form by how simple or complex it is; this has no relation to its content.

Historically authors were governed by literary forms; today we have the wealth of choice from the ages with which to compare contemporary work, and we have the intellectual understanding, through the study of English literature to appreciate different forms. However writing is still very much influenced by fashion; ~~today-the-sole-hero/heroine-in-a-novel~~ a poet deciding to write a collection of ballads would be unusual; due to this form being originated specifically for the oral tradition something which has almost died out in the Western world with the innovation of cheap publishing and the video generation. We can now read a poem again and again in a book, or watch a film on the television; videos allow us to rewind or fastforward our minds are no longer able to retain such amounts of information, because we do not want to. The endless repetition of the ballad form might erk the modern reader who has no need for this aural reminder of the plot.

I think that in some ways form has become less sophisticated than in the past, although this does not mean we are not creating more sophisticated plots or characters. In

Nicholson Baker's Room Temperature the form is through the stream of consciousness of one man in one afternoon. This creates a vastly complex world in which we discover the whole life and views of this man as he feeds his child, however the form is ultimately simple and naïve: one man ~~speaking~~ thinking. This has obvious reliance on James Joyce's Ulysses which is a highly sophisticated form to create utter simplicity and realism of thought.

Shakespeare created many characters and we see their world through his tragedies, as Donne creates complex characters through sonnets. Authors such as these would probably have written in novel form today as this is our most common literary form and they too might have used stream of consciousness. At the time they created their characters through the sophisticated forms of their time.

I think it is easy to be bewildered by good writers into thinking that their form is simply due to the quality of their writing. It is also confusing in that often very complex ideas are discussed in very primitive ways. I have read some works about psychology which are written in a very child-like step by step form to convey very confusing and labyrinth-type ideas. A good writer will appear not to have used a 'sophisticated form'.

Primitive forms might be used for a reason, to refer to a historical type, a sophisticated form might be used for the same reason. I think it is easy to feel that in the twentieth century we have achieved a greater and more tailored, perfected ~~use-of~~ English literature but ~~we~~ this does not have to mean complex.

Sophistication is achieved through a writer becoming happy with their work and perfecting it to their desire. Methods of writing might be sophisticated to achieve this, for example Jane Austen's writing often relies on irony to a sophisticated standard even the first line of Pride and Prejudice shows this. However I would not say that Alice Walker is without sophistication in her writing however the way in which she presents her characters is more suited to themselves and their upbringing. In The Colour Purple we see the heroine through her own eyes and her education leads to a more primitive style and form.

?# I hope I have explained why I think ~~this~~ that this type of literary boxing into 'primitive' and 'sophisticate' is worthless throughout history or even in contemporary terms. Authors decide to use different forms for different reasons it is no reflection on their ~~work~~ mental ability ~~or-a-necessarily~~ ~~a-hi~~ although history has governed the form used.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E3 MARK: 68 WORDS: 819
 ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH
 TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.
 MY REMARKS: The student drafted a brief outline of the essay before writing

The quotation in question is one which appears to be a very bald, generalised statement. It is almost inevitable,

therefore, that one will find oneself at least partly in agreement with it and that there will be points on which disagreement is possible.

The dramatic narration of a story or sequence of events by actors has gone on throughout history and has altered greatly. The methods used to tell a tale have altered, and-as have the aims and purposes in this narration. Ancient Greek tragedy, as exemplified through Oedipus Rex by Sophocles, is highly stylised and depends greatly upon conventions of form and drama. For example, there is a chorus which holds ~~dialog~~ conversations with the protagonists, urging towards certain actions and away from others. It is possible to consider this a primitive form since it is a direct comment on the actions of the protagonist, leaving little to the discretion of the audience. The fact that an explicit moral is drawn from the play could be thought to render it more primitive.

Elizabethan tragedy, however, still employed a chorus and still used it to extract an explicit moral from the drama. Although this was not often the case in later Elizabethan works, ~~Shakespeare~~ Marlow uses a chorus in Doctor Faustus. This chorus introduces the play, detailing the subject matter, and comments throughout until, at the play's conclusion, he presents the audience with an interpretation of the tragedy. This interpretation is that the potential shown by Faustus for excellence has been wasted ~~in~~ by his actions; in selling his soul to the devil he sold his freedom and his ability to succeed. In both Marlow's and Sophocles' plays one is presented with an interpretation of the action.

This, however, is not the case in O'Neill's Long Days Journey Into the Night. Here, the audience is left to draw its own conclusions; there is no specific moralising or pointing out of faults in either action or personality. This can be seen as a step forward in sophistication since the interpretation of the action is not separate from the text, as in the two earlier works, but is incorporated within it in the form of symbols such as the mist. This ~~is~~ symbol is highly suggestive of the confusion in which the family find itself, it reveals that all is not as it appears to be. In this way it may seem that tragedy has become more sophisticated in form.

Other arguments may be drawn from these three plays, however, which can be used to refute the statement in the question. Eugene O'Neill presented his audience with a relatively realistic train of events in a relatively realistic form. He wrote in prose, not in verse as both Marlowe and Sophocles did, and his drama is set in a middle-class household. While Marlowe speaks of the supernatural, of daemons and devils and present flying serpents on stage, and while Sophocles presents the lives of greek royalty and refers to Oedipus' battle of wits with the mythical Sphinx, O'Neill presents the traumas of middle class family life in ~~America~~ twentieth century America. O'Neill is more realistic, he portrays life as he sees it without the supernatural; but could that simply be a reaction to present day society rather than an increasing sophistication of form? The Elizabethans believed in God, the Devil, witches and daemons and so Marlowe presented them on stage. The legend of the Sphinx was one

known and possibly credited in Ancient Greece, Sophocles' audience knew the story of Oedipus and its background and knew what would be shown to them. In the same way, contemporary audiences shared a common background with O'Neill.

To return to the matter of the use of prose or verse, it is a matter of debate as to whether increasing sophistication is shown in the move from verse to more realistic prose. Is it sophisticated the attempt to duplicate life, as realist writers and dramatists of the nineteenth century often did, or to remould and recreate reality and present it in a heightened form? It is true that Marlowe's blank verse speeches are not those of everyday life, but they were not intended to be; they are an intensified, heightened presentation of human reality and emotion. If one considers, for example, Faustus' awe inspiring final speech, one notices that it effectively conveys his terror while retaining its form of blank verse. Is this not as sophisticated an achievement as the mere presentation of terror in prose writing which one could find in modern drama? Marlowe maintains the dramatic medium of the iambic pentameter while exploiting it to convey an intense emotion. His form divorces this somewhat from reality but I feel that this merely heightens the audience's reaction to the emotion presented.

While the accurate presentation of reality is a difficult, arduous achievement, I am uncertain as to whether ~~this~~ it is a more sophisticated form than shown in earlier writing.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E4 MARK: 58 WORDS: 616

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms'. Discuss.

All good literature should offer something which is profound and which makes some sort of contribution to its readership. 'Primitive' and 'sophisticated' are misdemeanours in our instance because they have no real relevance. 'Primitive' could refer to early styles of writing but, as with Wordsworth, the most simple styles reveal elemental truths of a profound nature. Therefore to state that there is a 'progress' from primitive to sophisticated forms is wrong.

We can compare two texts from an early to a late date to illustrate my point. The first text is The Canterbury Tales by Chaucer and the second is The Dubliners by James Joyce. Both texts are very similar in style and theme. Both write from a didactic viewpoint. Joyce aimed to make the people of Ireland 'take one good look at themselves' in a 'nicely polished looking glass'. Chaucer wanted to draw attention to the follies and vices of Medieval society. The Medieval institution of marriage was satirised in Joyce's 'A Boarding House' where the essence of marriage, 'love', was lost and all that was important was the document, the deed. Similarly the courtly idealism of love was held up as the norm in 'The <?> Tale' but cleverly undercut by its parody in 'The Miller's Tale' and the image of May destroying Damyan's love letter down the privy in 'The Merchant's Tale'.

The Church was the prime focus for both authors' satiric observations. The Catholic Church was as corrupt in twentieth century Ireland as it was in Medieval England and both authors set out to draw attention to this fact. The behaviour of the ecclesiastical members were responsible in large part for condemning the church as portrayed in Chaucer's prologue to the Canterbury Tales. Similarly Joyce uses the same technique. Father Pardon in 'Grace' replaces spirituality with a nightmare of materialism where 'work is use and not worship'. This indeed evokes Chaucer's Pardoner. The physiognomy of other important father figures such as Mr. Farnington in 'Counterparts', the pervert in 'An Encounter' and Father Flynn in 'The Sisters' echo the revolting description of Chaucer's summoner.

The priest-ridden textuality of The Dubliners is a reflection of the morally corrupt and debarred members of the clergy in The Canterbury Tales.

Both authors use a host of realistic detail to add authenticity and therefore encourage their audience to relate to them. Chaucer mentions 'the Tabard' just as Joyce's 'Araby' was a real event in and of St Jarvis Street hospital. The route the pilgrims took to the shrine of Thomas A. Beckett is as real as the map of Dublin one can trace through stones such as 'Two Gallon's'.

Joyce also makes use of Medieval symbolism. Both authors write plainly but to conceal a deeper meaning. Chaucer's 'artistic economy' compares with Joyce's 'scrupulous meanness of language'. Joyce's 'Grace' is an allegory to Dante's Divine Comedy. Similarly Chaucer's 'Nun's Priest's Tale' is an account of the Fall of Man as his 'Clerk's Tale' is an instruction of the patience we must all display in adversity.

We can see therefore that there is much similarity between two texts of vastly differing periods and styles, ~~writing~~ written in different ages. I would just like to reiterate the point I made at the beginning when I suggested that literature, good literature, is always valid no matter what period or style it is written in. As long as it has something to say which is of a fundamental nature concerning some aspect of mankind, it is as relevant to now as it was when it was written. The Canterbury Tales is still widely read and enjoyed now as it ever was, as it comes a universal application.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E5 MARK: 61 WORDS: 579
 ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH
 TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.
 LECTURER'S REMARKS: widely read and thoughtful, if rather <?> result.

The terms 'primitive' and 'sophisticated' are vague. Changes of philosophy over time, changes of ideas make what one era values as sophisticated and dendes <?> as primitive <spelling corrected by lecturer> at odds with the subsequent generation. To Milton, blank verse was the most sophisticated

and noble form of poetry, for a modern writer, the ideas and patterning of the blank verse are more freely structured but no less sophisticated for example T.S. Eliot. [not necessarily]

The terms also address issues of 'correct' subject for literature. Milton chose the highest most noble subject for Paradise Lost. Yet a Romantic poet would argue that the most noble theme for verse is the spontaneous outpourings of the soul, much as in lyne <?> a generation before Milton. (Compare Byron's 'No more we'll go a-roving...' to Marvell's To His Coy Mistress).

The rise of the novel also provokes debate. Initially it was regarded as an inferior form to poetry incapable of handling higher issues, for example Sterne's picaresque novels, Fielding's adventure stories. The novel became a vehicle for entertainment and for Satire, another low form. However, the satire of Swift's Gulliver's Travels is sophisticated in its antiquity: a novel that can also be regarded as a children's story is also a scathing political satire. By working on two levels Swift's construction and intentions are for more sophisticated than the moral narratives of Richardson for example, yet these forms were still regarded as inferior to poetry at the time.

The novels' status and popularity gradually increased until it touched on social and political and philosophical issues openly. However, the form remained untouched; third and first person narration, with a linear plot *multiple narration was experimented with in the Victorian age, e.g. Wilkie Collins' Woman in White, and Dickens' Bleak House. * until the earlier C20th late C19th century with Conrad, and his use of flash back under an omniscient-narrator a person narrator. For example Lord Jim where Marlow, the narrator relates the first half of the novel from the point in time between the past story of the Patna, and the future story of Patusan island. The structure is complex, and perhaps flawed in its temporal logic (Lord Jim is a long after dinner speech until two ?? through) but temporally a more sophisticated form than previous narratives, and because of its structure allows deeper psychological analysis <spelling correct by lecturer> than a single first person narrative.

The terrible overturning of values caused by the first world war led to the modernist movement, the Bloomsbury group. The discoveries of Einstein, Freud and Huxley allowed for no surety of position <spelling corrected by lecturer> in relation to the world or to oneself. Literature became generally less structured; more primitive in its execution but far more sophisticated in its ideas, with stream of consciousness novels, like The Waves Virginia Woolfe. Drama

Drama too underwent the same change, producing absurdist drama; Snood Wilson and Sam Shepard and stream of consciousness writing like Frank McGuinness' Baglady which is a psychological portrait. The banality futility and anger comes out in the works of Pinter and Caryl Churchill to a certain extent. Structures are broken down into primitive forms and to show psychological meanings.

From sophisticated controlled structures and ideas in verse, and drama and the new novel, literature has broken into a new medium paradoxically aiming at a simpler, direct and primitive projection of thought, while applying sophisticated means to do so, and perhaps distancing itself from the all but aspiring intellegencia as a result.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E6 MARK: 55 WORDS: 523

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to sophisticated forms'. Discuss.

Samuel Beckett stated 'form is content, content form' in the twentieth century revealing the movement from Classism <corrected by lecturer> to Romanticism to Modernism is a movement which reflect increasing sophistication of form.

Although earlier literary techniques such as those involved in metaphysical poetry seem complex it is only in the theme and imagery that the complexity his. Donne in A Valediction of Weeping: Forbidden Morning <lecturer corrected title> compares lovers to a pair of compasses <lecturer corrected punctuation> this is a complex idea, but the form of the poem is not complex. Wordsworth and Blake may use apparently simple language rendering an initial impression of primitive ~~thought~~ construction, but just in the same way as Donne, their ideas are complex their form is primitive. This is exemplified in The Garden of Love where Blake constructs a poem of four line stanzas with an abab rhyme, a primitive form of construction yet paradoxically it has complex meaning.

It is not until the twentieth century that form reaches its highest degree of sophistication. A critic at the Hebrew Institute for Studying Literature stated 'The plain answer is the modernist text is like a detective novel' One has to unearth meaning. The form of the text has become fragmented and the ~~modernist~~ sophistication of its form means the reader has to become actively involved. From earlier classical novels such as the picaresque Tom Jones, and Adam Bede where the story is told in mostly chronological sequence, twentieth century texts move in and out of the consciousness of time. In The Great Gatsby Fitzgerald reveals true sophistication. Nick Carraway narrates the story of Gatsby when he declared 'represented everything for which I have unaffected scorn' in ironic retrospect. He laughs at himself stating that when the story of his relationship with Gatsby began 'I wanted the world to be standing at a moral attention forever'. As their relationship develops Nick has to delve not only into his own past but into Gatsby's past to come to realise 'He was better than the rest of them'. By using a sophistication of time sequences we have to engage ourselves with a modernist text of this calibre much more so than with a classical text.

The novel Ulysses also proves that form become so sophisticated [that] is [it] has ~~been~~ become meaning. Written in mainly stream of consciousness style Joyce is highlighting the effect of the industrialist <last word underlined by lecturer> society on the human. It leads to isolation. Joyce's rendering of the psychological processes of Stephen's mind are

much more sophisticated than Shakespeare's soliloquies in Hamlet. Hamlet's words 'O that this too too solid flesh would melt and resolve itself into a dew' are easily comprehensible <lecturer corrected spelling>. However Stephen's contemplations, because of the form employed to describe them, do not render much meaning on their first reading.

Hardy's poem The Darkling Thrush contemplating the turn of the century is written in a simplistic form. However, George Orwell's 1984 is fragmentary and strange. Auden described literature as 'our only connection with the dead' it is totally necessary for us to live. ~~The content may always remain sophisticated but the form~~
The form has become sophisticated the content has always been so.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E7 MARK: 55 WORDS: 651

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms. Discuss.'

The progress from the primitive and basic to the sophisticated in literature is a fundamental one. We see it ~~bet~~ in all the various microcosms into which literature can be divided. In the works of individual authors we often see them developing and refining their approach as they gain experience. The work of James Joyce provides a suitable example: the storytelling of Dubliners led to the increased sophistication of Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man. The idea of stream of consciousness narrative developed in the latter was refined through Ulysses and reached its zenith in Finnegan's Wake. If we see this on a small level in the works of the individual writer it is even more obvious throughout the history of literature. The Canterbury Tales show English at its beginning and they show many central themes which have been developed.

The idea of experimenting with language is among the most significant. Chaucer was experimenting with creating <lecturer underlined creating> a standard language adopting certain foreign words and creating a style of grammar. This language, 'Middle English' was refined to the basis we know know. The use of language has increased in sophistication. Chaucer was content to have a useable language that was almost standardised. The work of Alexander Pope, written in the standard meter of iambic pentameter lines rhymed in pairs demonstrates the use of precision. Perhaps the most interesting development in ~~lit~~ language in literature has been the attempts to break it's rules and achieve freedom. Shakespeare's use of blank verse show an early example. His purpose in creating a style of poetry that possessed the open characteristics of prose was to allow his speeches a more emotively broad range and he did achieve this to a large extent in his great soliloquies. The obvious example of deconstruction of language is the post

modernist movement. The classical references often prominent within post modernism works such as Eliot's The Waste Land and Joyce's Ulysses show a balance between the struggle for freedom and the love of the past. The elements of foreign languages such as Greek, Latin and German in The Waste Land are typical of post modernist writers. Perhaps the step on from this may not be more sophisticated but is certainly another aspect of linguistic experimentation <lecturer corrected spelling>. The works of authors of the 'Beat generation' such as Jack Kerouac achieve linguistic freedom by emulating the rhythms of jazz on such as saxophonist Charlie Porter. The sentences are written to simulate the rhythm of saxophone lines and the beat of jazz which they saw as the rhythm of life. The work is free flowing like free jazz and moves along at a rapid pace reflecting the beat writers desires to experience life at a break neck pace. The progress we see here is a gradual one. Once the rules had been established people started to bend and break them one by one. Every time a rule is broken it allows the next generation to go further. Some such as Joyce push it to the limit others are content to take short steps.

I have concentrated on the development of language in it's move from primitive days of not even having standardised usage to where it is now in terms of sophistication. The reason for this is that literature in the late twentieth century is very much caught up with language. People have realised it is the tool of literature and must therefore be refined and adapted in order to encourage innovation. It is interesting to note in closing that in the beginning people were striving to bring the vast areas of language down to a standard form governed by rules. Upon finally doing this people concerned with literature are now trying to break down those rules and gain freedom which is essentially what we had in a non standardised language. Sophistication may just be a way of getting back to basics.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E8 MARK:60 WORDS:444
 ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH
 TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.

At first sight this would appear to be a virtually unassailable position to take. In this computerised, technological world we have, on the face of it, reached a degree of sophistication in our life styles which appears to demand a similarly highly sophisticated form of literature.

Surely the modern reader derives little enjoyment from Beowulf or the Canterbury Tales particularly as the language has changed. Do we enjoy the poetry of Larkin more than the verse of Wordsworth? Indeed is the verse of Larkin more sophisticated than that of Wordsworth. Perhaps the mistake one makes is to assume that

literature has become more sophisticated with the passage of time. At first sight this does seem to be the case that is largely due to the change in the structure of our language. Texts of the seventeenth century use archaic phraseology and vocabulary but that does not <?> less sophistication in the thought process.

Possibly the classic example is Shakespeare. Surely he is now old hat for modern man and yet, admittedly with more modern variation in spelling, he is as widely enjoyed as ever he was.

The novel which is a more modern form of literature has probably changed little in its format, with a conventional story line as employed by the Victorians still in evidence today. Certainly there have been deviations from this path, notably James Joyce's work, but, in general novels take the same shape as they have always done. Sometimes a more sophisticated approach is a failure since the bulk of books are bought by a fairly unsophisticated readership. One has only to observe the significant increase of the number of novels sold after a particular book has been televised and these tend to be novels of the Dickens, Trollope, Jane Austen type.

Poetry has tended particularly in the present century to have taken on what is imagined to be a more sophisticated format. No longer is it fashionable to produce page after page of iambic pentameters, each line rhyming and scanning. Instead we are faced with what appears to be badly printed prose with indeterminate length of line and no rhyme pattern apparent. If this can be considered a more sophisticated form of verse, then certainly it can be argued that there has been a progress from a primitive to a more sophisticated form. It is however debatable that the form of Milton's classical Paradise Lost is less sophisticated than modern poetry.

We tend to imagine that everything today is more sophisticated in form than that of our forefathers but in relation to literature one would be advised to take a more cautious approach.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E9 MARK:54 WORDS: 367

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.

This issue of progress in literature seems to me to be a very thorny one. Progress, after all is something nigh on impossible to judge. Change is inevitable, the tide of history, shifting populations, new discoveries, technological breakthroughs; all these things have an inevitable, ~~effect~~-~~then~~ though unpredictable, effect upon literature.

If by 'sophisticated' we mean more complexity of plot, more descriptive description more convincing characterization, and so on; then it seems ludicrous to suggest that literature is becoming more sophisticated.

The works of Chaucer, for example, are like a medieval tapestry; richly textured with a wealth of very real characters, intricately structured plots and photographically accurate descriptive passages. In recent years there has been a trend towards a more stripped-down, minimalistic tendency in literature, deliberately becoming more basic, more 'primitive'. To then suggest that literature is ~~develutng~~ devolving from sophistication to a primitive state is patently absurd.

What literary progress involves, is absorption of what is new, philosophically, demographically and so on. It is for this reason that Hamlet does not muse upon the nature or what it would be like to have been born a Pakistani woman rather than a Danish Prince. It is also for this reason that the novels of Marton Millar involve drug-culture, assassins hired by the milk marketing board and videogames addicts. It is the job of the author to translate the world around him, or her into words.

Where it may be possible to trace progress from 'primitive to more sophisticated forms' is within a genre or strand of literature. Shakespeare's tragedies are are great deal more complex than the Jacobean tragedies which preceded them, just as the Jacobean wrote more complex plays than the Romans. Ian Banks' Use of Weapons is a more sophisticated work of science fiction than H.G. Wells' The Time Machine, though it will have less impact, because Wells was breaking completely new ground and Banks is simply writing outstanding material in a now well established literary tradition.

On balance, though, the history of literature as a whole, does not involve 'progress from primitive to sophisticated forms'; it merely changes with fashion and necessity, sometimes making the former from the latter.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E10 MARK:60 WORDS: 744

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.

Literature is the means of allowing an author to express an individuality, artistry and knowledge that no other person can assume. The imaginative quality of a work of art may be immune to imitation, but the structure itself is a learned form. Indeed, some literature is valued more for its structural precision and artistry than the expression itself. As time progressed and man discovered the great gift of his intellect and imagination literature became more influential and admired. It was not mocked at as a insubstantial profession constrained within the limits of ineffectuality but was studied and scrutinised for its moral worth and argument.

The first great forms of literature came to life during the ancient classical period. To say that these works, perhaps the first to be recognised as being worthy since their dominance permeates the ages, are not

sophisticated merely because of their period setting is absurd. If Homer and Virgil had not written the great classical epics, saluted by critics today as triumphs in the literary world, where would Milton, Webster, Pope, Spenser be? The structure and the argument of the Iliad and Aeneid is just as complex and provocative as Milton's Paradise Lost. Each work of literature explores the opportunity of ingenuity within the construction of an epic poem and relies heavily on other forms of literature. Indeed, Milton was inspired to attempt the epic form because of the influence of such classical epics and if anything his work lacks the interest and sophistication of his ancient models because it is modelled on them. Rather than support the belief that literature must necessarily progress from primitive to sophistication in time with history, it is far more sensitive to reflect how literature in different periods relate to and compliment others.

The genres themselves - lyric, tragedy, comedy, satire, epic - all have their roots in the classical tradition. The lyrics of Horace and Catullus are just expressive in their emotions and ingenious in their structure as those of Donne or Spenser. The fact that poets find it interesting and worthy to look to ancient poets when embarking in new composition seems to suggest that poetry, from the onset, was sophisticated if mastered. Pope aspired to imitate Horace's poetry because he admired it and thought of it as an excellent model. The interest of Pope's work is independent of that of Horace's because each poet is an individual whose personality, thought and emotion are as important in the composition of literature as talent and skill in construction and metre.

One could suggest that the history of literature can be seen to be an advance from primitive, or shall we say less refined in ingenuity, works to sophistication is the manipulation of ancient texts. The rehandling and reconstructing of epic works for satirical purposes in later periods certain critics might recognise as a skill that illustrates the sophistication of literature of this period. But it is important to note that such literary works, satirising the genres and patently mocking particular poets and writers, were present in ancient times too. Ovid's Metamorphoses indeed is a mockery and playful muddling of the Augustan classical tradition in a mock heroic style. The formulaic epic style is exaggerated and initiated for comic purposes but done very subtly. Indeed, the whole Augustan concept of the golden age full of prosperity is challenged, as well as contemporary values concerning honour and marriage. Similarly, centuries later, Pope achieves the same effect in his mock-heroic poem Rape of the Lock. The ridiculing of contemporary society because of its insubstantiality, pride and egoism is used for comic purposes. Again one notes the poet's decision to initiate ideas that they be all the more absurd at their deflation. If both Ovid and

74 Pope can achieve the same result, both enjoying success
 75 (though the Roman did shake after Ovid's critical work
 76 was taken too literally) then literature can be supposed
 77 to be unaffected by time. In fact, I would put forward
 78 the argument that literature, being an expression of
 79 thought and imagination, is solely dependent on its
 80 author for sophistication. Since the true philosophers
 81 and intellects of our age today look back to the ancient
 82 Greeks and Romans for support and, since contemporary
 83 poets recognise the value of ancient literature, it is
 84 insensible to assume that literature refines with the
 85 passing of time. If a literary work is successful at one
 86 period it will withstand the passing of time itself.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E11 MARK: 62 WORDS: 914

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.

1 # The history of literature must move from primitive
 2 forms to more sophisticated forms, just as all areas of
 3 human progress, whether in sciences or arts, move in this
 4 direction. The simple reason is that humans build upon
 5 the past, upon what has gone before, and thus are never
 6 entirely original because, rather than working in a
 7 vacuum, the human mind cooperates with the world of ideas
 8 which exist externally. And yet 'sophisticated' connotes
 9 a value-judgement, as if it were better than the
 10 pejorative 'primitive', and this certainly cannot be the
 11 case as <?> literature of all ages seems to have a mark
 12 of profundity - something beneath the 'primitive' or
 13 'sophisticated' form - regardless of its age.

14 # If we take Joyce's Ulysses as an example, the
 15 towering masterpiece of the twentieth century which
 16 deconstructs all the existing narrative norm and uses
 17 perhaps the most sophisticated systematisation up to that
 18 time (1922), we may feel immediately inclined to judge
 19 modernist forms as sophisticated, and classical or
 20 medieval forms as primitive. But Ulysses, by its very
 21 title, takes us back to the classics. However primitive
 22 the style of Homer's Odyssey & Iliad may strike us in
 23 comparison to Joyce, there is something (most
 24 particularly plot structure and cohesion / unit) which
 25 always draws the modernist back to the primitive
 26 literature, whether it is Joyce using Homeric structure
 27 in the twentieth century, Pope's complete reliance upon
 28 classical allusions (Homer > Virgil > Milton) in the
 29 eighteen century, or the Romantic obsession with
 30 Classical ideas and places, especially found in Keats.
 31 Literature will always build upon what has gone before,
 32 and in that sense the movement from primitive forms to
 33 sophisticated forms is inevitable, but the terms must not
 34 be interpreted as judging one literature as higher than
 35 the other; surely Joyce, Pope, and Keats were moved to
 36 emulate the classics for deeper reasons than mere
 37 convention or blind adherence to tradition. The classical

literature (primitive in form to later literature because of its historical existence) can be seen to stand as the foundation for all later works, so that where form becomes increasingly sophisticated through time (and change, and experiment), the content remains the same. While some critics may balk at this implication of an objective human nature which stands still and can be analysed through the ages, materialising in a wide range of works, I can see no other reason why literature from the 8th c. B.C. (Homer) could be used to dictate the structure of a twentieth century novel which is breaking grounds in so many directions that it literally changes the face of the novel.

One example of a primitive literature (Chaucer's Middle English) where the style is actually quite sophisticated is The Nun's Priest's Tale in his Canterbury Tales. An allegorical and risible tale, the Nun's Priest humorously (and so sophisticatedly) deals with the problem of deciphering between Free will and Fortune; a farmyard cock dreams he is swooped away by a fox and asks his wife Pertolete if his dream is a prophecy, or just the result of a stomach ache. She wrongly says it means nothing, and Chanteclar is taken off by a fox. Coincidence or prophetic vision? This question has bedevilled humanity from Oedipus through to the present; how can we ever be sure if our own free will directs our life, or if it is part of a grand scheme preordained by God, or if a vague power of Fate / Providence rules over us, constraining our very thoughts? This question is the central focus of all of Joyce's work, especially A Portrait and Dubliners <?> they trace the journey of the modern man from the constraining but securing Fate (of Church, nationalism, family, etc.) towards the liberating (but equally alienating) choice which modern humanity must face. Why, then, in a 'primitive' literature (early Chaucer) where we are supposed to have tradition binding us so completely that the modern crises between fate and choice do not arise, do we have this marvelous tale which confronts the quintessentially modern plight? The answer is that primitive literature may be lacking in the historically built-up form which later literature amassed through the ages, but it is not lacking the central question which still keep us in awe of the unknown, and will, it seems, continue to do so.

But as well as serving as the philosophical or moral framework upon which further literature builds, 'primitive' (earlier) literature is still not merely content without form. Different ages revere different styles, and forms come in and out of fashion. For Pope, the classical styles were far more sophisticated than the grub-street filth he saw all around him in 18th c. England, despite their being more primitive historically. And the twentieth century Imagists, like T.S. Eliot, found the hitherto disregarded style of the 17th c. Metaphysical poets (Donne, Marvell, etc.) startttingly

powerful and useful for their own cold, hard, direct style. In this way, 'sophisticated' literature of the present (or recent past) does not only look back to the earlier literature for enduring human questions, religious ideas, moral structuring, or general philosophy - important as these are. Sophisticated literature can also learn from and copy ancient styles and modes of representing ideas through words, so that we can witness a definite movement from one form to the next by adding on to what has gone before, but also a firm reliance on past forms which demand a continuous reworking of their subtle complexity.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E12 MARK:55 WORDS: 631

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4a 'The history of literature involves a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms.' Discuss.

STUDENT'S REMARKS: didn't finish. sorry about that.

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Not quite organized.

MY REMARKS: handwriting shows lack of time and hurried writing

~~The-history-of-literature-is-based-on-criticism-If-you-can-pick-up-a-book-and-read-what-the-history-of-literature-is,-then-that's-what-it-consists-of.~~

In the course I have studied (unsuccessfully) this year, I certainly do not feel the statement is relevant [lecture corrected spelling]. Chaucer is not a more primitive writer than Joyce, though I would be inclined to state that Wordsworth is, & simply because his theories are so ~~badly~~ ~~hammily~~ stated in comparison with his poetry - in his dramatic presentation ~~he-anticipated~~ ~~to-an-exte~~ telling the Lyrical Ballads, he ~~antieipated~~ has a similarity with Joyce and the language of real men.

History (defined: a steady marching of the years onwards into infinity from <? ?>) certainly does 'involve' a progress from primitive to more sophisticated forms. Joyce was luckier than all the other writers in that he had access to the ideas and their mistakes. The critical acrobatics required to explain how Joyce is a brilliant writer (most entertainingly done in Colin MacCabe's The Revolution of the Word) certainly ~~are-more~~ require more sophisticated reference to Wittgensteinian notion of language, and jargon and po-faced (deliberate, I hope) descriptions of what Bloom means when he farts, in order to isolate exactly what it is that makes Joyce a ground-breaker, ~~sophistication~~. Joyce can be classed as the most sophisticated writer of literature in that his work is still spanning critical studies, and is not widely read. Chaucer's decision to ~~copy-down~~ make a compendium of oral literature in the Canterbury Tales, for aristocratic consumption marks the beginning of the history of English literature.

Wordsworth represents a conscious rejection of ~~sophistication~~ what he sees as the fatuous sophistication in favour of a more 'primitive' style - Lyrical Ballads

(form) and the Prelude (epic subject matter - wittily choosing himself). One can argue that this is a sophisticated jump in conception, but I'll lay money down that one would be wrong - perhaps trying to cram the idea into an Essay (and what 's wrong with that?).

If one takes the revolution of interest in the Churches of Nicholas Pyer in the early 80's - namely 'Hawsmoore' as a subject, one can see so-called 'primitive' and 'sophisticated' literary form side by side.

Peter Akroydd's book Hawksmoore was treated to considerable critical acclaim, described as 'scarifying' in the Guardian and won the Pulitzer Prize. It is brilliantly handled, showing a considerable knowledge of the principles of the gnostics, occultism, faith in the power of becoming a God through creation. ~~(like-Joyce, being-worshipped-this-very-minute-resurrected-and-picking his-nose-as-he-watches-~~

His use of two narrators, one talking in the metaphysical language of the 17th c., another blandly stretched in the genre of detective novels, is expertly combined in a final page and a final line that rivals Great Expectations '... and I am a child again, begging on the brink of eternytie...'

This line echoes backwards through the book. Dyer, traumatised by the plague, possessed, grows to murder children until, in an exact meeting of opposites, he comes to meet Hawksmoore, himself ~~future-ghost-to-become~~ a in a future time, suitably a man who hunts child killers.

The ~~sophisticated~~ manner which Akroyd manages to manipulate the single gnostic idea of the meeting of opposites into a popular novel that makes the reader sense its 'experience' is sophisticated in the extreme. Yet the book, as Akroyd points out, owes much to Iain Sinclair's 'prose-poem' (<?> - which one could argue ~~was~~ ~~extremely~~ has a more 'primitive' feel to it (i.e. - eternal forms, insistence on the imagination, even to extent of hallucination ~~as-opposed~~ sense individual, as opposed to all the Freudian based ~~society-orientated~~ psychologically ~~centred~~ (and socially) controlled literature that can be called 'sophisticated'.

Sinclair studies the Churches, works as a labourer in their gardens, and records, (without the use of 'perverted commas') what he sees in a vision steeped in the tradition of Blake, yet organised with Joyce. The form is deliberately primitive - superstitious, and ~~has~~ ~~parallels-with-the~~ it is written as a heretic might write, with superstitions, hints of mental illness.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E13 MARK: 73 WORDS: 1078

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.' Debate.

LECTURER'S REMARKS: The candidate suffers from trying to get too much into three hours. Very promising work.

1 # Literature as an art form is one which more than any
2 other has the power of influence; while music and painting can
3 be argued to make a direct appeal to the emotion, no ~~art~~
4 ~~form~~ medium makes so direct appeal to the brain and
5 intellectual and moral spirit than the written word. If
6 literature's appeal and influence is so great it is inevitable
7 that its use in fiction will be for, in many cases, for social
8 reform, identifying the evils of the day, whether it be in
9 politics, art, war, the position of women or ~~identifying-the~~
10 highlight the excuses ~~and-frivolities-of-the-society-in-which~~
11 you and shallow values of the society you live in. Moreover
12 the ways in which the writer approaches his readership, and
13 the slant, and indeed the nature of the reform he promotes all
14 influence the technique used to convey the message; if social
15 reform is the intention of the work then the assessment of ~~the~~
16 its success ~~will~~ must be based on the effectiveness of the
17 reform of changing opinion. Socially effective literature is
18 intrinsically connected with change and this change can be
19 affected in many ways - through an appeal indirectly ~~to-the~~
20 ~~sensibilities~~ or directly.

21 # Many authors, argue the worth of appealing indirectly
22 to the readers soul and sensibilities as a way to reach their
23 opinions. It may be argued that when people feel a thing to be
24 wrong, rather than know a thing to be wrong that action is
25 taken. Carlyle and Dickens both subscribed to the view that
26 while they wished for a change in society they would rather
27 affect such a change in their hearts slowly rather than in
28 society quickly. The turmoil of Revolution <?> disorder that
29 terrified them and it was values not hierarchy that they
30 wished to overturn. In Dickens' novels his blend of realism,
31 which made no concessions to the reader, and took his
32 bourgeois middle class readership into areas of London they
33 were but barely <?> aware of, ~~and~~ is juxtaposed by a
34 sentimentality which makes every concession to ~~the~~ his
35 readership, so that their emotions were raised to a pitch of
36 extreme empathy. The technique of pitting an identifiable and
37 sympathetic character such as an Oliver Twist, a positively
38 allegorically 'good' figure; against the harsh reality of
39 society ~~stimulates-the~~ makes the reader question the system at
40 which he is victimised - the Workhouse within and the society
41 of uninstitutionalised poverty without. The reader is still
42 more moved by those characters, ~~whom~~ who unlike Oliver do not
43 achieve a happy ending, and who die for lack of love as much
44 as anything. What about the countless nameless children that
45 Oliver leaves behind in the Workhouse? - or Jo; who in his
46 position of road sweeper and spreader of diseases moved along
47 time and time again. 'He don't know nothink', and this Dickens
48 replies, but not states is the tragedy of society. Yet
49 Dickens, and Carlyle, for all their intentions to work on

Men's Hearts, are explicit about their intention Sartor Resartus Carlyle's one and only work of fiction, while it allegorises the need to redress society does not clothe the need desire for spiritual rebirth on a sympathetic character; Teufelsdröckh's agonies are so convoluted, and symbolised that they are in the end somewhat detached from the reader, the reader's sympathies lodge nowhere, within a mass of philosophical speculation which is stimulating to the mind but not to the heart strings.

If pulling at the heart strings is the aim of effective way to reform society then, how successful are books such as Vera Brittain's Testament of Youth in which her autobiographical account of the first world war sees her male relatives and fiancée die one by one. The book has a clear anti war message and nothing if not affecting, Wordsworth took a similar approach in The Ruined Cottage in which Margaret goes into a steady decline following the departure of her husband for <?>. The deterioration of ~~the country~~ her cottage (and her control over the surrounding vegetation) charts her mental deterioration and the rural idyll that once characterised her dwelling is contrasted subtly with the effect that the outside, industrial world had on Margaret.

The subtlety of such approaches however may be seen to be so subtle as to by-pass the reactions of many readers for socially effective <?> does more than make its readers think 'What a shame'. Pope and Byron took a more explicit, ironical view to criticising the society in which they lived through satire. Pope's Dunciad allows no dull tool to go uncommented, while Byron's English Bards and Scots Reviewers laments the deterioration of contemporary literary society in equally scathing terms. Satire is an effective and clever way of making a dissatisfaction with the system felt it is one that is used by Dickens (for example the <?> existence) and by Carlyle extensively it identifies the problem, but ultimately most satire suggests no answers, and allows the reader the comfort of laughter.

The comfort of laughter is denied the viewer in socially bleak Modernist drama such as Waiting for Godot; the hopeless stasis of the characters forms an impressive and ~~but not-commentary-view~~ depressive view of modern life; the two tramps constantly running their dialogue round in circles; yet no commentary is offered ~~equally-depressing~~ *the reader however is offered the <?>, and socially effective drama perhaps needs to confront the reader with the problem on every front of the play's non realism; Estragon and Vladimir exist <?>, so we may say 'they do not exist in our world'.*

~~Equally-depress~~ It can be contrasted with The Mad Man a Scottish political drama by Tom McGrath, in which the outlook is equally bleak but intrinsically contemporary. Its single issue is prison reform and in its treatment it demands no sympathy, only shock, for ~~Boyle's~~ Burne's treatment both of his victims and his victimisation at the hands of the system are placed in our world and are unconcluded and ongoing. The approach is effective and unsettling.

Socially effective literature is that which does have evident designs on its readers, ~~but-these-designs~~ for if its designs were not evident they would pass the casual reader by - and to be socially effective it is here you must catch. However its effect is multiplied by allowing the reader to deduce the issues and wrongs, perhaps through raising their emotional indignation rather than telling. While being told about a wrong has merely a momentary impact, deducing and realising a wrong has a lasting and effective ~~impact~~ effect.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E14 MARK: 61 WORDS: 922
 ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH
 TITLE: 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.'
 Debate.

Whether or not literature should be used as a means of persuading its readers to adopt the ideas or views of its author is a point of debate. The issue of this essay is whether literature is more effective in its influence on society when it does not have deliberate designs on its readers or not. This may be discussed by examining works such as the novels of James Joyce's Dubliners.

Literature that does not have evident designs on its readers may for example be seen in the novels of Jane Austen. The world which she writes about may appear to be for the purpose of entertainment. Her novels are all romances in which similar sets of people, all from similar walks of life - the landed upper middle classes with comfortable homes, find themselves marriage partners. For example Elizabeth Bennett and Mr Darcy in Pride and Prejudice. However I feel that beneath the level of the narrative her works could be socially effective in their portrayal of character which could be viewed as a moral purpose of the author. Characters often have to progress through a series of changes throughout the novels where they emerge as more suitable and deserved of their chosen marriage partner. For example Emma Woodhouse in Emma who is born into a privileged family with all that she could ask for is also a spoilt and immature girl who tries to manipulate the fortunes of others by arranging marriages. A series of lessons which are taught to her by Mr Knightley both tones a change in her character whereby she realises her mistakes and also makes her realise that he is the man whom she must marry. Jane Austen's use of the omniscient narrator gives the reader clues as to who are the characters we must trust, such as Mr Knightley and who are those that are 'not quite the thing' (Mr Woodhouse) such as Frank Churchill. In Charlotte Brontë's novel Jane Eyre, both the heroine and her potential husband Mr Rochester must also experience a development in their characters before the situation allows them to be man and wife. Works such as these perhaps do not have evident designs on the reader in for example a political way but a moral undertone

could be seen as a guide to the reader. Good characters such as Mr Knightley could be seen as a benchmark by which the flawed characters may be judged in order to warn or instruct the reader. These however are personal lessons.

Literature is also socially effective when novels have a clear design on the reader as is it then obvious what the author's intention and opinion is. However if the reader does not agree the predominance of the authors designs could be a point of antagonism between the consumer and the producer of the work which could be readers' view and enjoyment of the book. For example George Orwell's Animal Farm a political allegory for his view of the Russian Revolution could be seen as effective both for its political message which the reader may agree or disagree with but also for its allegorical novel which could be compared with other works such as Kenneth Grahams The Wind in the Willows.

Often works which do have designs on the reader can be enjoyed anyway as the authors method is subtle. For example Thomas Hardy often makes a number of social statements in his novels but they do not override the main enjoyment of the narrative. In Jude the Obscure Hardy interweaves social comment with the fate of his main protagonist Jude, for example when he fails to gain admission to an Oxford college because he is a working man. He also fails because of his character - his failings and susceptibility to drink and women. In James Joyce's Dubliners the stories may be enjoyed both as 'slices of life' of the citizens of Dublin, and also the reader can appreciate Joyce's message about the paralysing effect that the Catholic Church and English rule in Ireland are having on the city. Dickens who was definately a social novel, did have evident designs on his readers in Bleak House. He wished to point out to them the failings of the Victorian legal system which was through its ineffectiveness creating social problems such as poverty and slums. The novel however is not less socially effective because of this as this is only one aspect of the novel - it can also be read as a as detective story with its Dedlock mystery and detective Mr Bucket.

Thus in conclusion it can be said that works which do not have designs on the reader such as those by Jane Austen may be socially effective in a personal way by their code of morality or characterisation. Other authors such as Hardy Dickens and Orwell who do have clear designs on their reader - social or political are not I feel less effective. Their teaching may be ignored or disagreed with as they are not the only aspect of the novel with which the reader can interest him/herself. Usually the authors' messages are skilfully interwoven with the main narrative and serve to enhance its richness rather than to make the novel less socially acceptable. The crux of the problem may be whether or not it is better for the author to make his designs evident, or

97 whether it is better for each individual reader to find a
98 personal message or meaning for himself or herself.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E15 MARK: 66 WORDS: 1031

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.' Debate.

LECTURER'S COMMENTS: Powerful if onesided answer

1 ~~#-The-question-about-whether-socially-effective~~
2 ~~literature-is-that-which-does-not-have-evident-designs-on~~
3 ~~its-reader-is-basically-a-question-about- \langle ?~~-attitudes-to
4 ~~censorship-~~

5 # Literature not essentially have evident designs on
6 its reader otherwise it does not fulfil the idea of what
7 literature is. At its most basic level if a book is not
8 designed specifically to attract readers it will not be
9 read, and thus any novel writer will make his or her book
10 as attractive to the general public as is possible. This
11 is an evident design. A writer seeks to influence a
12 decision of \langle ? \rangle by the way in which he presents his work.
13 On a more intellectual level, however, this is also the
14 case. If one relates literature, as an art form and
15 photography, which it has been said of that photography
16 is the most objective of art forms then one will see why
17 an author always has a design. A photographer of
18 landscape will shoot a role of film of a scene which he
19 has nothing to do with. He appears to be simply recording
20 events. This is not true, he is filtering and choosing
21 exactly what parts of that landscape which please him
22 best. When an audience sees the pictures in question they
23 see only that which the photographer wishes them to view.
24 This is also true of a writer. Subjective opinion is an
25 intrinsic part of literature. There is no writer who can
26 write objectively and thus all literature has a design.

27 # This design, however, may not be an evident
28 design, according to the question. In order to back up
29 this statement we must examine the meaning of 'evident'.
30 This would appear to be a social term. Referring to the
31 more obvious forms design orientated literature like
32 political novels. In this case the question is found to
33 be false. What could be more obviously designed to
34 provoke a questioning of society than George Orwells
35 1984, and yet this novel did in fact make the general
36 public question itself \langle illegible lecturer's comment \rangle . It
37 is also the only novel in Britain to become a best seller
38 twice. In sales of the text rocketed as people found in
39 it much that was true, or true of their present society
40 \langle lecturer underlined from much, plus illegible comment \rangle .
41 Anthony Burgess in A Clockwork Orange also provided
42 debate in his time, and his novel has an evident design.
43 When his book was filmed it was banned because it was
44 'evidently exposing youth culture to elements which were
45 far from positive'. The only reason the film was not
46 particularly socially effective was because it caused

such a reaction amongst the adolescents who did see it that it was immediately taken off the market . Youth groups had formed in imitation of the adolescents in the film.

Marxist literature has definite designs on its readership, and it has been extremely socially effective. Had Marx not written Das Capital the Russian Revolution might never have happened. It is precisely this extremism, this evident design which makes literature so effective. <illegible lecturer's comment> People are attracted to extremes in literature. When Hume wrote A Treatise on Religion which was intended to provoke social comment and discussion it did because it was so revolutionary. In Hume's time there was no questioning of the omnipotence of God, therefore the reaction to Hume was all the more extreme. Literature which does not have a particular design is generally weak.

Literature which is badly written and does not last for a long time can have an impact on society precisely because of its designs. The novels of Jackie Collins and her kind are very socially effective because they influence women subtly. Literature that encourages women to be subservient <lecturer crossed the hyphen>, however badly it is written it is effective. Just as public images of people on television effect the general public so does literature. Perhaps this is where the question does have some bearing. Subtle designs on people are effective if they are continuous and reiterated constantly.

In Aldous Huxley's Brave New World it is the subtle conditioning that creates the socially effective changes in his society. If one relates this to present day society the same sequence of events can be seen. Popular culture is full of subtle ideas that effect people. In rag literature, comics and magazines people are bombarded by certain messages. If this constant process is kept up then they cannot possibly not be effected by the images, subconsciously they will take them in. This may be the case but it does not mean that evident designs are any less effective. The books with a story obvious design are the books that are remembered. Aldous Huxley may have written a book about subtle conditioning but the book itself is a very strong piece of writing, and has a far from subtle meaning.

Books with a specific and obvious design are the books which are remembered. They <? ?> the typical literature of a period. ~~Even-if-the-literature-is-not particularly-long-lasting~~ Joe Orton's plays for example were very effective because of their design. ~~Orwell~~ Orton made little social comment and his main objective was to provoke laughter. He did. He intended to provoke a specific reaction, and he managed to. The design was very obvious to an audience but that did not detract from the effectiveness of the plays.

If literature is not read because of its fundamental intent then an author has managed to provoke

a social reaction. Peter Wright's Spycatcher ~~was~~ had a specific motive and it effected people in Britain because it could not be read. This censorship of literature proves that works which have intentions on their audience are seen as dangerous or effective. Good literature has always stood outside of the system from which it comes and this gives it much of its dynamism. Dictators have always tried to bury disruptive literature, extremist texts, because they know the power that writing has. Hitler burnt Marxist texts, and Stalin destroyed Trotsky's literature because literature can bring change. Popular culture books which do not have a dynamic meaning which compels or revolts a reader do not last. A text which conforms to a subtle meaning which backs up the social norms of that period tends to get lost in the revolutionary dynamic literature which forces a reaction from an apathetic public. Design forces changes and reactions, which are the essential functions of socially effective literature.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E16 MARK: 63 WORDS: 829

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.'
Debate.

I believe that it was George Orwell that said the following: 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.' The key word here is 'evident'. Karl Marx's Das Kapital is an obvious example here of a work that openly displays its political outlook. The reader is immediately aware of the author's intentions (to change society through revolution), and this could have a negative effect. All readers bring to any literature their own views, other people's views, society's views, etc. By overtly stating that 'this is a communist manifesto', Marx could bias the reader against his ideas, rather than towards them.

But does literature that does not have evident designs on its readers work any better? The novel, in my opinion, can be just as socially effective as a political manifesto. Oliver Twist by Charles Dickens is an example of this. The author manages to criticise the Poor Law, the Workhouse institution, poverty, the neglect of children, etc. without upsetting the establishment. Dickens uses Oliver as a double-edged sword. On the one hand he is the charming orphan who the reader follows eagerly from adventure to adventure, but, on the other, Oliver works as a criticism of society. Charles Dickens was allowed to attack institutions and any other 'wrongs' of the Victorian society through this device. His double-edged sword also worked. The Poor Law was changed, the harsh schools in Yorkshire, attacked in Nicholas Nickleby, were reformed. But is this form of literature the most socially effective?

To answer this we need to look at authors other than Dickens. Charles Dickens became an 'institution' in himself and was allowed to attack the ills of society without facing any imprisonment or fine. Other writers were not so lucky. Jonathan Swift is one example. He used his literature to attack the ills of his society but could not be so open as Dickens. We can see how Swift overcame this problem in a work like Gulliver Travels.

This book can be read as both a children's story and a political satire. Swift has added a safety valve (not required in Oliver Twist) so that if challenged to defend his attacks he could offer the excuses that it was a children's story. However, there is a flaw in his argument. How many adults today perceive the book as a satire? For millions of readers it has lost its 'bite', as it were, and has become a children's story about giants, dwarfs, etc. It is less socially effective because the political content lies beneath the surface.

The same is true of A Modest Proposal. Here Swift parodies the English attitude towards Ireland and suggests that a remedy for starving people would be to eat their children! In its absurdity the idea is devoid of its alarming possibilities. It is a revolting concept which leaves the reader to contemplate whether Swift really was mad, as some claimed him to be, instead of re-thinking the whole question of treatment of the Irish people. Am I being too negative here? Possibly some people are moved by the work and feel outraged at the way Swift 'cons' you into almost accepting the proposal - he puts it so well. But the work did not change anything.

Swift does not come 'straight-out' with what he means. He hides his political content under the cover of children's stories and exaggerated proposals. Dickens managed to change society by actually coming out with what he means. He does not hide from the truth, he exposes it. His works are entertaining and we let him criticise our schools, workplaces, manners, etc., because we are enjoying the story. His novels are hard to put down and engage the reader - whether he or she like it or not.

In this respect Dickens is effective in changing his society - his literature works. Not by disguises, or by political manifestos, but by entertainment. His novels were read by the working classes, as well as by Queen Victoria! He therefore touched the whole of the human spectrum (unlike Marx and Swift) and the fact that his readership was predominantly middle class did not seem to matter - these were the people, after all, who were able to change things. I am therefore in agreement with the quote, although not without one reservation. For literature to be socially effective then it must change the 'whole' of the society. Dickens was concerned with minor adjustments - not issues which concerned the whole of society. His novels are restrictive in their attacks to certain areas of society - poverty and neglect of working class children - rather than attacking the whole

86 of society - the low status of the child in Victorian
 87 life for instance. However, as a reformer of society
 88 through literature he remains unequalled, his polemic
 89 unmatched. I can think of no modern writer who can hold a
 90 candle to him.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E17 MARK: 67 WORDS: 883

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers'. Debate.

1 # George Orwell once wrote that 'all art is
 2 propaganda', by which he meant that, amongst other
 3 things, all literature will have some message beyond that
 4 of the events which it describes. Even a writer who
 5 claims to contain no message in his or her writing is
 6 thus demonstrating that there is a point of propaganda in
 7 their work, albeit a negative one.

8 # Such propaganda can range from the blatantly
 9 obvious though to the exceedingly subtle. it is doubtful
 10 whether anybody has ever read Animal Farm and thought it
 11 an every day tale of rural life. Neither could Gulliver's
 12 Travels be consumed without some notion that Swift's
 13 concerns went beyond telling of a man who journeyed to
 14 strange places. On the other hand, it would be possible
 15 to read Oliver Twist or Money and perceive them as 'just'
 16 stories, failing to notice, or at least failing to
 17 comprehend, Charles Dickens' attack on the workhouse
 18 system or Martin Amis' on the greed and vice of the late
 19 twentieth century.

20 # In seeking to debate this statement we must define
 21 what we mean by 'socially effective literature'. If all
 22 art, and hence all literature, is propaganda, then that
 23 which is the most socially effective is that which
 24 succeeds in influencing its readers towards a particular
 25 point of view. Now, when we talk of 'propaganda' we tend
 26 to think primarily of political propaganda. Indeed, the
 27 examples quoted thus far have all been such pieces. But
 28 this is by no means the only sort of propaganda. There is
 29 that which seeks to convince of a message: for example,
 30 L.P. Hartley's Eustace and Hilda is concerned with an
 31 evocation of youth, and the relative value of youth as
 32 compared to old age. As Eustace look back on his
 33 childhood, spent on the fast <?> Anglian beaches with his
 34 sister Hilda, the reader can only agree that for this
 35 character at least, and possibly for all of us, youth is
 36 the best period of our lives. Is this propaganda
 37 'socially effective'? The design which it * Eustace and
 38 Hilda * has on its readers is not immediately 'evident'.
 39 And yet, all art is propaganda: all literature does have
 40 some form of design on its reader.

41 # Thus far, we have identified three degrees of
 42 evidence of design in literature. There is the blatant
 43 (Animal Farm); the subtle, but perceptible to those with

a modicum of intelligence (Money). and that which needs to be teased out with tweezers and forceps (Eustace and Hilda). Which of these degrees is the most 'socially effective'? This is, of course, a question which it is for us to answer, for the effectiveness springs not from the degree to which the designs on the reader are evident, but rather from the quality of the writing and the validity of the point which is contained within the writer's designs. Thus, the most socially effective literature is that which is well written and which makes a valid point.

To take Animal Farm as an example: the social effectiveness of the parallels drawn by Orwell between a coup on the farmyard and communist rule in the Soviet Union has been enormous. The images live with us. Only last week, following the takeover of power in Ethiopia by a regime once Marxist-Leninist in orientation, the BBC journalist pondered up on the question of how long it would be before the Ethiopian people 'discovered that some pigs are more equal than others'. The effect of Animal Farm has been enormous because those who have read it, and many who haven't, have fixed in their mind the point which Orwell is attempting to make. But the effectiveness is not in the fact that it has 'evident designs on the reader', but rather in the fact that the book is brilliantly written and makes a valid point. The Marxist who reads Animal Farm may not find it to be socially effective at all, if they disagree with the fundamental point which Orwell is making.

To slip down the scale to the other extreme, Eustace and Hilda is a similarly socially effective piece of literature, but once again it is not the fact of whether 'designs on its readers' are 'evident' or not which makes this the case, but rather the combination of marvellous writing and a valid point. Cider with Rosie by Laurie Lee makes a similar point to the early parts of Eustace and Hilda - about the value of youth. But because, to this reader at least, Laurie Lee's writing is cloying, the social effectiveness of the book is limited. One cannot empathise with the characters if one takes an instant dislike to them. One does not yearn for one's own childhood in solidarity with the yearnings of somebody for whom one doesn't care. Eustace, on the other hand, is a wonderfully evoked character for whom we do care very much: as he yearns, so do we. Thus the social effectiveness of the novel is enormous.

To conclude then, the most socially effective literature is not that which does not have evident designs on its readers, but rather that which is well written and which makes a valid point to which we want to be receptive. The evidence or otherwise of its designs is largely irrelevant.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E18 MARK: 57 WORDS: 1321

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.' Debate.

LECTURER'S COMMENTS: Doesn't really answer the question. Rearranges the <?> doubtful fashion.

1 # I do not agree with the statement that literature
2 which is most socially stimulating does not have some
3 intentions regarding the reader. I have found numerous
4 novels with a strong social message <lecturer crossed out
5 from 'regarding' to 'novels' and commented: [This is not
6 what the question states]> <?> intent on engaging the
7 readers' sympathy with the protagonist, thus rendering an
8 even greater and stronger effect. I believe that it is
9 often the premise of the author to 'work on' the readers'
10 feelings and mind so that he or she may more successfully
11 drive in his or her social commentary and theories. This
12 is evident in two novels of the Victorian age, Tess of
13 the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy and Jane Eyre by
14 Charlotte Brontë.

15 # <?> is Thomas Hardy's intention in Tess to depict
16 a young woman unable to live the life she desires and
17 achieve a sense of self-realisation and development. We
18 see Tess go through many trials and disappointments in
19 her brief life. Hardy shows us the harsh reality of
20 society, a body of stringent and narrow-minded people
21 intent on setting up rules by which all the members must
22 abide. Those who reject society's ideals will be
23 outcasts. And this is exactly what happens to Tess. A
24 poor yet educated woman, Tess cannot seem to escape from
25 the boundaries of her society. Yet she refuses to be
26 doomed to a life of impoverished existence, forever bound
27 by a sense of duty and responsibility to her drunkard
28 parents [father]. Tess desires to live a life free of the
29 common ideals of society. Our sympathies are played upon
30 by Hardy in his attempt to relay this theme. Tess is sent
31 off by her helpless parents to get a position at the
32 estate of a supposed distant rich relative. By doing so,
33 Tess is lowering herself to the position she detests
34 most. She does not desire to be subservient to someone
35 else, but would rather live unhindered and realise her
36 womanhood. Resulting from this trip to Alec D'Urberville,
37 Tess is raped, gives birth to a child, Sorrow, who soon
38 dies. We are made to feel sorry for Tess, for she did not
39 want to go to the D'Urbervilles in the first place and
40 then she gets this sorry situation in the end. She is of
41 course outcasted by society and antagonised by her mother
42 for getting herself into this situation. When Tess
43 baptises the child herself on its deathbed we are made to
44 feel even more sorry for her. And throughout her journeys
45 on the quest to be her own person, living by her own
46 morals and values, we feel even more sympathetic towards
47 her as she is continually shot down. When she finally
48 finds a man with whom she is happy, Angel Clare, we are

happy. And when he eventually discards her because he finds out about her past, making her all of a sudden a different woman, we feel sorry for her. Why can't Tess find some happiness in the world? We are angry when she returns home to her disgustingly pathetic mother to help her set up a new life and we are even more distressed when she resigns herself to a life with Alec. Tess has not been able to overcome the tenets of society, and must, like everyone else, give in. Society has been unforgiving of her and we find this unfair. Why should Tess be haunted by one mistake and caused to pay for it throughout her life? This question plagues the reader throughout the novel. I believe that we are most strongly engaged in the story when Tess finally kills Alec in the end. I almost let out a cheer for her. She finally wipes out the cruelty that has beset her throughout her life. When she kills Alec, she destroys society in her mind's eye as well. And in the end when she is caught for Alec's murder and hanged, we feel badly. We end up condoning murder, a terrible crime, because we feel so sorry for Tess. Yes, she should get away with this deed, and be allowed to live happily with Angel. Hardy plays on our sympathies so strongly in this novel that we come out condemning society for what it has done to Tess and supporting Tess in her quest to live a life of individuality and peace. And this is exactly what Hardy desires to occur and is quite successful in making it happen.

In Jane Eyre Charlotte Brontë produces quite the same effect in drawing the reader in to feel sympathetic toward Jane. From the beginning we feel sorry for her as she leads a lonely existence amongst her cruel aunt and cousins. When she is sent off to the dreadful Lowood we hope that she may find some escape, but see her degraded by the harsh and <?> rules which command her. From the start we want Jane to win. We desire her to find love and human companionship. And we want it to be more than simply little Adèle. Brontë paints a picture of Jane that is sure to grab us. By setting her up as a desolate orphan looking for some sort of mother figure we immediately feel sorry for her. And as we watch her defy society by living a single life and advancing herself through education we support. When she finally finds happiness with Rochester we are satisfied, of course until she finds out about his insane wife from whom he is not divorced <last four words underlined by the lecturer>. When Jane flees from this situation we agree that this is best and we want her to find someone and something better. <'someone' and 'something' underlined by lecturer, comment: [Do we?] and another illegible comment>. As she trudges through the moors on this quest our hearts go out to her. Will Jane forever be alone? When she ends up with the Rivers and discovers some happiness we are content to see Jane somewhat settled [?]. Yet when she is proposed to by St. John Rivers we want her to say 'no'. Will she resign herself to a life of subservience?

happy. And when he eventually discards her because he finds out about her past, making her all of a sudden a different woman, we feel sorry for her. Why can't Tess find some happiness in the world? We are angry when she returns home to her disgustingly pathetic mother to help her set up a new life and we are even more distressed when she resigns herself to a life with Alec. Tess has not been able to overcome the tenets of society, and must, like everyone else, give in. Society has been unforgiving of her and we find this unfair. Why should Tess be haunted by one mistake and caused to pay for it throughout her life? This question plagues the reader throughout the novel. I believe that we are most strongly engaged in the story when Tess finally kills Alec in the end. I almost let out a cheer for her. She finally wipes out the cruelty that has beset her throughout her life. When she kills Alec, she destroys society in her mind's eye as well. And in the end when she is caught for Alec's murder and hanged, we feel badly. We end up condoning murder, a terrible crime, because we feel so sorry for Tess. Yes, she should get away with this deed, and be allowed to live happily with Angel. Hardy plays on our sympathies so strongly in this novel that we come out condemning society for what it has done to Tess and supporting Tess in her quest to live a life of individuality and peace. And this is exactly what Hardy desires to occur and is quite successful in making it happen.

In Jane Eyre Charlotte Brontë produces quite the same effect in drawing the reader in to feel sympathetic toward Jane. From the beginning we feel sorry for her as she leads a lonely existence amongst her cruel aunt and cousins. When she is sent off to the dreadful Lowood we hope that she may find some escape, but see her degraded by the harsh and <?> rules which command her. From the start we want Jane to win. We desire her to find love and human companionship. And we want it to be more than simply little Adèle. Brontë paints a picture of Jane that is sure to grab us. By setting her up as a desolate orphan looking for some sort of mother figure we immediately feel sorry for her. And as we watch her defy society by living a single life and advancing herself through education we support. When she finally finds happiness with Rochester we are satisfied, of course until she finds out about his insane wife from whom he is not divorced <last four words underlined by the lecturer>. When Jane flees from this situation we agree that this is best and we want her to find someone and something better. <'someone' and 'something' underlined by lecturer, comment: [Do we?] and another illegible comment>. As she trudges through the moors on this quest our hearts go out to her. Will Jane forever be alone? When she ends up with the Rivers and discovers some happiness we are content to see Jane somewhat settled [?]. Yet when she is proposed to by St. John Rivers we want her to say 'no'. Will she resign herself to a life of subservience?

105 She has been on a search for her own sense of identity
 106 and control over her life. We see the prospect of her
 107 marrying St. John Rivers as a means of giving up. And when
 108 she leaves him and returns to Rochester we are content
 109 that she has found solitude <last word circled by the
 110 lecturer and a question mark is put next to it> and
 111 happiness. If we examine the view that Jane is a
 112 controlling and manipulative woman who goes back to the
 113 blind and lame Rochester so that she my control him, as
 114 he once dominated her in a sexual sense, we still retain
 115 a sense of satisfaction. The bottom line is that we want
 116 Jane to succeed in the end. I believe that she deserves
 117 it after the lonely childhood and sense of displacement
 118 in life. So whether she is simply content and in love
 119 with Rochester, or she wants to be the dominant one in a
 120 relationship, we still feel sympathy toward her. Brontë
 121 effectively draws up into the life of the characters,
 122 especially Jane, so that we in a sense 'live' their
 123 traumas as well as their moments of pleasure. It is
 124 Brontë's intention to make us reject the Victorian ideal
 125 of women, that of passive, weak servants, just as Jane
 126 does. Brontë definitely makes a commentary of society,
 127 just as Hardy does. And like Hardy, she draws the reader
 128 into the life of the heroine and almost makes us feel her
 129 emotions. This renders an effect most satisfactory to the
 130 author. If we do not dissect the novels, or shall I say
 131 'murder' them, then we are sufficiently played upon by
 132 the author. <lecturer underlined from 'If' to 'then we'>
 133 It is when we tear apart the characters and devise
 134 obscure meanings for their action that we lose sight of
 135 the author's intentions. Yet taken for how these novels
 136 were just described, it is clear that both Hardy and
 137 Brontë had specific motives for drawing the reader in a
 138 making him/her feel the protagonist. In turn their social
 139 commentaries and beliefs are more effectively relayed.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E19 MARK: 57% WORDS: 524

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that
 which does not have evident designs on its readers.'
 Debate.

- 1 # Today, perhaps more than ever, we are constantly
- 2 bombarded by literature, magazine and media coverage
- 3 about the socially underprivileged. Through the mass
- 4 media we have been made aware of the poverty and need of
- 5 huge numbers of people around the world. Yet as a society
- 6 the help and aid we give these people has not increased
- 7 with their numbers or our greater awareness of them. It
- 8 is still a matter of intense debate which is the most
- 9 socially effective way of imparting concern to the
- 10 public.
- 11 # Literature to tackle this problem can be of two
- 12 basic types: fiction or non-fiction, both attract
- 13 different audiences. Non-fiction is very often targeted
- 14 at specific groups: those with the power to help. That

is. the readers of a specific newspaper, parliament etc. By its very nature this literature reaches fewer people, but hopefully those it does reach it affects. Fiction, although again targeted at specific sectors of the community, reaches much greater numbers. Today not everyone may buy a newspaper, but they will read, and watch cinema, and television. People do this to relax, once relaxed they are more open to suggestion. One reason why television advertising is so successful. Fiction, based on fact, is a very effective medium.

Dickens is generally thought of as one of the great literary social critics and reformers. After the publication of Great Expectations the deportation of convicts to Australia was abolished. Oliver Twist successfully dislodged the magistrate Laing after Dickens' portrait of the evil and sadistic 'Fang'. Bleak House and Dombey and Son brought the issue of sanitation much closer to a successful conclusion. His sanctioning of the 'ragged' school movement gave it much greater power and success. Incidentally it was Dickens who first coined the phrase 'ragged' school.

But for all this Dickens never took an active role in social reform. He was against the violence and demonstrations of the Chartists. He swore he would never join the House of Commons in an attempt to change things directly. Neither did he personally donate much money to the charities he praised publicly. Dickens did not have a philosophy about social reform or a proposed solution. He was a novelist first and foremost, a social critic second. Yet he had a profound effect on society. One just has to think who it is he remember most today, his friend Carlyle or Dickens himself.

Other authors around this time were also making contributions to social reform. In Jane Eyre Charlotte Brontë exposed the hardships and cruelties of the school system, just as Dickens had done in Nicholas Nickleby. Wordsworth a few years before was very much a kindred spirit. Neither man wanted rapid social change, but rather a change of heart.

Dickens did not have blatant designs upon his readers. He knew that many of them (if not most), like Esther and Alan Woodcart in Bleak House would return to their cosy little existences. After the successful salvation of Oliver, few readers would turn their minds to the other 'Olivers' out there. Nevertheless Dickens achievements are great and the power of his medium is not to be underestimated.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E20 MARK: 60% WORDS: 613

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers'. Debate.

For a piece of literature to be socially effective it must produce a change within the reader's perception

of society. Literature has been used throughout time as a socialising agent and it can either reinforce society's values or question them in the hope of producing change. In Plato's Republic the power of literature is recognised in that Plato saw some Greek tragedies as portraying events contrary to Greek ideals. Plato thus proposed a form of censorship and in proposing this he recognised that literature can indeed be effective in communicating a social message. The question here, though, is that given literature does not have an inherent power how is this influence best used.

When literature has 'evident designs on its readers' it can be said to be a piece of straightforward propaganda. This can be effective, as is seen in Marx's writing or Hitler's Mein Kampf but perhaps literature such as this can be said to be overtly political and therefore any reader reading it is doing so in the knowledge that his social and political perception is under attack from an author trying to change it.

It is when a piece of literature does not at first glance seem to have 'evident designs on its readers' but in fact actually turns out to be a form of propaganda that its effectiveness can be questioned. This sort of investigation can perhaps said to be centred around the question of a reader's preconceptions. In other words <?> reading Karl Marx a reader knows what to expect. If though a reader picks up a piece of literature and the author intends the work to have a basic social purpose ~~to be socially-effective~~ the outcome can go in two directions. Either the reader's preconceptions and the form of the writing is such that the propaganda contained in the work becomes overtly biased and contrived, so that the reader dismisses it. Or, the author succeeds in 'deceiving' the reader so that the reader thinks he is being entertained and in being so engaged he finds himself increasingly having to question his own ideals and perceptions. Dickens in fact summed up these two distinctions when he said that through his literature he wanted 'a change in spirit, not a spirit of change'.

Dickens' novels question institutions in such a way so as not to offend the reader so as to make him walk away but to get him to question his society. It is to achieve this that Dickens uses comedy due to the very fact that if people are laughing they have to wonder what they are laughing at. This is the function of Bumble in Oliver Twist and the Pocket family in Great Expectations. A similar effect can also be achieved through the use of symbolism and hidden references as in Swift's Gulliver's Travels or Pope's satirical poems such as The Rape of the Lock or the Dunciad. These works and much of their contemporaries attempted to be socially effective through satire and this although in a different manner to Dickens again uses comedy.

~~Works-and-pieces~~ Pieces of literature do not though have to hide behind the guise of comedy to be socially effective. Attacks on one's contemporary society

59 can be made by using a classical model, such as Milton's
 60 Samson Agonistes or in drama like Shakespeare or modern
 61 dramatists such as Pinter. Not all genres are effective
 62 as others but the major factor is that if a reader is
 63 reading a piece of literature in the hope of being
 64 entertained and not for any political reason it means
 65 that any overt propaganda would then seem both
 66 incongruous and clumsy.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E21 MARK: 60% WORDS: 405

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that
 which does not have evident designs on its readers.'
 Debate.

LECTURER'S REMARKS: <illegible>

1 # Throughout the ages, history has shown, that the
 2 most popular books have been books easily accessible to
 3 the understanding and works that can lift the reader out
 4 of everyday reality into escapism.

5 # Nowadays, art is looked upon as a method of
 6 escapism from the reality of life. Therefore, if
 7 literature were to lecture us and clarify for us the
 8 problems of society, it would not be read for pleasure
 9 and ultimately would not be socially effective. However,
 10 if the social theme is not obviously the main theme, it
 11 can be successful as the reader takes it in almost
 12 subconsciously without knowing it. Dickens is a prime
 13 example of this, he makes the worlds of rich and poor,
 14 violence and corruption made known to us, but it is not
 15 the central theme. Pope voices his views on the
 16 corruption of Queen Anne's England on society by wealth
 17 and commodities in Rape of the Lock; but his burlesque
 18 ironic style covers this up.

19 # Oscar Wilde in The Importance of Being Ernest
 20 writes 'a trivial comedy for serious people'. His look
 21 can be enjoyed at face value for his comedy and
 22 satirization of society. But it can be taken on a serious
 23 level, how ridiculous society has become, how 'good'
 24 families always seem to have fairy godmothers; as in
 25 Oliver Twist.

26 # Poetry often makes social comments without the
 27 reader realising it. In Herbert's Easter Wings, the
 28 visual effect of the wings enters the mind subconsciously
 29 and makes the religious world more accessible to the
 30 reader. In Wilfred Owen's Dulce et Decorum Est, he is
 31 talking about the patriotism of war and the feeling of
 32 comradeship. But, images of men 'choking in a sea of
 33 gas', and trudging for miles, makes the reader aware of
 34 the horrors of war. In Journey's End, a play set in the
 35 earlier part of the 20th c., black humour is used to
 36 cover up the horror of trenches. The character of
 37 Stanhope are shown to begin with as admirable and
 38 enthusiastic and Raleigh continues to see him like this
 39 throughout the play. But society can see the pressures
 40 war showing through underneath as he turns to drink. The

play can be taken at a face value as a comic depiction of life in the trenches. Society receives an undercurrent message of the horrors though. If this was obviously on the surface, the majority of the people would ignore it.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E22

MARK: 61% WORDS: 744

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.' Debate.

LECTURER'S REMARKS: Good, <more illegible remarks>

There is nothing more irritating than literature preaching to its readers. Far too often, particularly in social and political writing, the writer is too eager to make a particular point about some political corruption or social injustice, and so loses sight of the fact that literature is primarily read and theatre primarily visited, for entertainment value. An audience will not respond so directly to a moral message if they feel they have been spoon-fed the values of the dramatist to the detriment of the depth of the literary value and realism of the play. This can be illustrated if we refer to some modern twentieth century drama, written with a particular social or political message in mind, and view the effect it has on the reader or audience. It becomes apparent that the plays which indirectly, through a feeling of depth of human emotion, realistic situations and often humour, portray a particular social message, do so in a more lasting and entertaining way than those who simply preach through giving characters the values of the author, as they are more likely to <?> the sympathies of the audience.

In Ibsen's An Enemy of the people the reader or audience are manipulated in ways he or one may never ever realise. It is through an intricately woven plot and subtle development through cleverly corrupted dialogues that the one character who is striving for the greater good of the people is brought out to be an 'enemy of the people' and handed out by the rest of the community at large. Through this, then, Ibsen makes a strong statement on the ability of growing institutionalisation to corrupt the manner and extinguishing the ability of the individuals to think for itself [?] at all. The most interesting thing about this play, though, is the way that it uses the message to gain the sympathies of a whole audience to think in exactly the same way; all come out agreeing with Ibsen about the loss of individualism and how terrible it is that whole communities can now be corrupted into thinking in one particular way! Because Ibsen's design on his audience are not immediately evident, his power of manipulation are increased. [good]

Everyone hates being moralised and preached to <'to' crossed out by the lecturer>. To get one's message across, <?>, how can writers avoid this situation of resentment in the audience. Tennessee William, in the

play A Streetcar Called Desire, comments on the lack of caring in modern society where a woman can be allowed to slip into moral disrepair; Blanche is forced to create a whole fantasy world to hide the failure of her reality; and she finally has to be institutionalised as no one is there to save her. William, by creating such a strong individual protagonist avoids preaching; the depth of emotions and complexities within Blanche evoke a great sympathy in the audience and we leave the theatre or book with a sense of great indignation at society where nobody cares, where institutions are left to do the job of human caring and devotion. This exactly what William intended, but as we are feeling this way through sympathy and not through moralising we are not resentful of the social message - we have not lost any of the entertainment value through this.

Arthur Miller, in The Crucible, takes this a stage further. He takes a contemporary social issue, that of the McCarthy anti-communism 'witch-hunt' and <?> under the guise of the real witch-hunt in Massachusetts in the 17th century. The themes are the same - men's hysteria resulting in irrational behaviour and innocent people being condemned for being witches; every one taking a <?> stance in the hope of securing their own back, and societal values becoming more important than individual beliefs. However, Miller allows us to choose whether we wish to make any parallels with the contemporary McCarthy issue. They are there to be made, blatantly obvious instances can be seen and Miller's opinion of the McCarthy thing is also obvious and maybe the main social message of the piece, but the important thing is that we are allowed to choose.

These plays have had lasting value and appreciation - are seen as modern <?>. Audiences return repeatedly to the audiences to see them and we can hence see the value of subtlety in portraying one social message over the obvious preaching style of plays which, significantly, have no lasting value and fall by the wayside.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E23 MARK: 60 WORDS: 571

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.'
Debate.

There was once a very good, sincere, well-crafted anti-war movie shown in a small town in America. The day after it was shown, army recruitment in the town went up by 30%. It is very hard to try and change or form people's opinions without appearing patronising, overbearing and single-minded.

However, it is possible and it has been done successfully in literature. What must always be remembered is that although people read to be informed, their primary need is to be entertained - therefore the

author's primary purpose must be to excite the reader in some manner.

An author such as George Orwell in 1984 or Animal Farm was writing as a political artist but his near-fervour, imagination and awareness of the reader's own intelligence saved his works from becoming tracts. In fact, it achieved some of its purpose - Orwell wanted us to become aware of controlling factors in our own life and his character of Big Brother has become a symbol for the unknown Mr Big.

What is socially effective literature anyway? Does it want us to change aspects of our political or social lives? Does it merely want to make us aware of our own prejudices? Does it want us to re-assess our individual places in society?

A writer such as Franz Kafka, in The Trial or in his short story Metamorphosis (!?), was perhaps largely voicing his own paranoid fears. The works express a fear of being lost, of not being able to communicate, of not being able to control the environment, of being in an illogical and cruel world. However, these works have touched many people, even if Kafka was not specifically trying to inform us of the more inhuman aspects of society - he did so. What has made Kafka important to us is what validates all literature - it has aroused our own imagination, and fears.

The Fixer, by Bernard Malamud, is trying to inform us of our own prejudices by describing the life and death of a Jew accused of ritual murder merely because of his religion. Malamud wrote this a young(ish) man and its message is carried through his passion.

I think in some respects, the quote is wrong, certainly to be successful, an author cannot lecture his readership but he must also recognise that his readers are intelligent enough to have more insight into their own world. Malamud makes no bones about what he is trying to do, perhaps trying to attempt to disguise your intentions is just as patronising as to lecture to somebody.

The author must treat his reader as an equal which was what Orwell, Kafka, Malamud have all done. I find it hard to recall any work which have been so saturated and over-burdened with their social purpose as to make them unreadable but this is probably because I stopped reading them. ~~which~~ This perhaps suggests that texts which have social change as their primary goal are not read and probably never get further than a publisher's waste-paper bucket.

Actually, one of the most popularly read forms of literature which does set out for social change is newspaper and magazine articles. A well-written article can and often does change and form opinions. However, people expect them to carry out this purpose; literature, on the whole, has not been allocated this place, and people are less willing to accept it.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E24 MARK: 59 WORDS: 728

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4b 'The most socially effective literature is that which does not have evident designs on its readers.'
Debate.

By 'socially effective' the essay will take the question to be meaning how much actual change in the reader in their attitude towards society there is. It could thus be extended to mean the degree to which a work of literature can change society's views towards society. 'Designs on its readers' will be taken to imply the degree of rhetoric which on the surface is evident in a peice of literature. This is a fine line to draw, but the distinction becomes obvious when one considers The Bible and the difference between the 'Ten Commandments' which obviously are trying to change society, and the story of Job, which can remain the story of a man but may be interpreted as a moral lesson in patience. So the question is, does interpretation work a greater social change than pure command.

There some middle ground here. The rhetorical of a command might only be effective if one instantly sees the sense of that command. The command, however, is likely to have more social effect if some reason is put forward for it. One seems to be searching towards the benefits of interpretation when one considers Marx's Das Kapital, for instance. The commandments are there but it is its peculiar combination with a philosophical approach that have made it so successful. * An undesirable 'socially effective' peice of literature!! Russia, China ... etc. * A convincing interpretation of society is offered.

But we are not talking near enough to man's soul here. Much has to accompany the social effects <?> by the ten commandments of The Bible and Marx's Das Kapital. Society has here to change itself and she is left with the combined effect of literature and social organisation.

We have concluded that, if a work is not to have designs on its readers, then the readers will have to use the faculty of interpretation to elicit social content and judge from there whether it will be of use or not. One now has to enter the realm of subjectivity as one is <?> the souls of individuals not the soul of the masses. There appear to be three main ways such literature can socially effect one.

First, as in One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, one becom#s trapped into the sense of entrapment, mistreatment, <?> hopelessness of its protagonist. At the mistreatment, leading to the bloody suicide of an inmate at a mental ward, one's own reaction is strong enough to mirror that of the protagonist and one, as it were, actually finds oneself strangling the ward sister WITH the protagonist. It is only afterwards that one can stand back and <?> the social implications of the work with any amount of psychical distance. This appears to work well,

but depends on the susceptibilities, imaginative and otherwise, of the reader.

Second, one can be revolted and a distanced is possible, for example interpose to the atrocities committed on a personal, social and state level in A Clockwork Orange by Burgess. One feels to reject certain modes of behaviour and organisation, but the examples used to generate this reaction ('ultra-violence' brain-washing, political manipulation) are too distanced to be of any lasting benefit, and the level of society attacked (the rot at its core, implicitly, maybe) is beyond the reach of the individual.

Third, one can strike a sort of medium. Remember, it is a personal attitude that we are talking about now, and in this sense any significant (or even insignificant) amount of social reorganisation or change is impossible. In Tess of the D'Urbervilles, by Thomas Hardy, 'Tess' battle with Victorian industrial economics and the people bred thereof (Alec, the perpetrator of her 'fault') is symbolised in a 'battle' she has with threshing machine, driving her to work harder to thresh the corn, into exhaustion. Here a symbol is found ... one we can immediately sympathise with on a meaningful level, yet maintain enough physical distance for one's interpretative faculties to 'take one there' and <?> one's answer to a phenomenon.

It is in this bridging of the gap, on a personal level, that lends a sense of integrity to the work. You have part been taken there, part gone there yourself and plus <?> enough lives within one's soul for the symbol to become significant and change one's ATTITUDE towards society.

ENGLISH SCRIPT: E25 MARK:63 WORDS: 525

ENGLISH LITERATURE 2 - JUNE 1991 - EDINBURGH

TITLE: 4c 'In all great poetry there is something which must remain unaccountable ... and that is what matters most' (T.S. Eliot). Discuss.

As far as my instincts tell me, interpretation will be the death of literature. However, it is also the life force which makes literature an inimitable being - great poetry will go on forever while scholars' attempt to identify exactly what it was the poet was really trying to say . And as far as poetry is really concerned, it's keeping it to itself. T.S.Eliot is probably right when saying 'in all great poetry there is something which must remain unaccountable ... and that is what matter most', because if the mystery of poetry was taken away it would also lose its allure and its fascination.

If the retention of some unaccountability in poetry means a retention of a degree of mystery in its meaning then this should surely devalue poets who say what they mean rather than shrouding their writing in interpretative obscurity. However, this is not the case as many supposedly great poets said what they meant. Was

not Wordsworth' euphoria plain to see when he said 'and then my heart with pleasure fills and dances with the daffodils'. While there is little room for interpretative debate <? ?> it remains a fact that Wordsworth is identified as one of the greatest poets of the English language and he left very little unaccounted for in his work.

And do those who do leave much unaccounted for in their work instantly become recognised as 'great'. This dubious and rather frightening thought would admit into the hierarchy of poetic genius all those whose writings defied interpretation and kept their meanings to themselves.

What really qualifies Eliot's comment is the inclusion of the word 'something' - this allows us some leeway between those who say something which no-one understands. The poets who can offer us something of both have hit upon a happy mechanism which gives us just enough away to keep the reader duly fascinated. Ezra Pound's In a Station of the Metro is one of the shortest yet most image and message packed poems around. The title seems to tell us more fact than the poem itself does, and the beauty of the words and their construction offers hours of contemplation of what Pound actually meant or felt when he wrote them. Gerard Manley Hopkins is another poet who keeps a lot unaccountable but offers us beauty in his poetry all the same. The Windhover may not expose its meaning directly, but the ecstasy of the words and the style complement this mystery rather than aggravating it.

Thus in great poetry something must remain unaccountable, but something else must render it valuable enough to allow the poet to keep his mystery. Peculiarity and obscurity are all very well, but it must be remembered that if a poet publishes his/her work, it is upon public appreciation that credit rests, and if too little is accounted for credit will not be given. Obviously this raises numerous questions about who it is written for, but if, as I understand it, poetry is about communication then it is vital that it fulfils this capacity and doesn't leave the reader perplexed and none the wiser.